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THE  
PROBLEM OF EVIL

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THE  
PROBLEM OF EVIL

*AN INTRODUCTION  
TO  
THE PRACTICAL SCIENCES*

BY  
DANIEL GREENLEAF THOMPSON

AUTHOR OF 'A SYSTEM OF PSYCHOLOGY'

LONDON  
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1887

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TO MY LONG-TIME FRIEND  
WILMOT L. WARREN  
OF SPRINGFIELD, MASS.  
IN COMPANIONSHIP WITH WHOM  
I BEGAN MY TRAINING IN SYSTEMATIC THOUGHT  
AND WHO HAS BEEN PURSUING  
HIS OWN GOOD WORK UPON SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES  
IN ONE OF THE MOST PRACTICAL DEPARTMENTS OF LITERATURE  
THIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE THEORY OF PRACTICE  
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PART I.

THE NATURE OF EVIL.

‘This is peace  
To conquer love of self and lust of life,  
To tear deep-rooted passion from the breast,  
And still the inward strife.’

ARNOLD, *Light of Asia*

## CHAPTER I.

### *PHYSICAL AND MORAL EVIL.*

THE terms *Evil* and *Good* mark antithetical ideas which have maintained their opposition in all human thought and action. All experience manifests the distinction between the Good and the Bad, and hence all language, all literature, all science, and all action must recognise such a distinction. Speaking generally, without regard to philosophical exactitude, *Good* is that which is desired, and *Evil* that which is avoided. To the individual alone the Good is that which he aims to bring into his experience, conserve, and perpetuate; Evil, on the other hand, is that which he endeavours to cast out and keep out of his experience. In like manner to society the Good is that towards which effort is or ought to be directed to secure and preserve, while Evil is that which is or ought to be avoided and warded off. Good is to be sought, Evil is to be extirpated; Good we would retain for ever, Evil we would abolish entirely.

It is one of the purposes of this treatise to fix more exactly and accurately the meanings of *Good* and *Evil*, especially the latter term. The above remarks will, therefore, be sufficient provisionally, and will answer the end of directing the attention to the questions to be brought forward for consideration. Religiously considered, the Problem of Evil is the most perplexing and seemingly the most insoluble of any that pertain to theism. Given an omnipotent and benevolent Creator, how can it happen that there is evil at all in a universe of His creation? All sorts of solutions have been proposed, but none of them have been entirely satisfactory, and hence the question always presents itself anew. I<sup>1</sup> do not state

<sup>1</sup> Fashion varies from time to time with regard to the preference for 'I' or 'We' in introducing the declaration of the author. If either is used exclusively or too frequently it is tedious to the reader, though the old criticism that 'I' indicates egotism on the part of the writer is substantially obsolete. In a work

this problem with the expectation of solving it, but with the hope that, by studying the nature of evil and generalising some of the facts of human experience with respect to it, we may ascertain its proximate sources, and indicate the general methods by employing which we may effect its reduction, and, to as great an extent as may be, its elimination.

Much of the evil of which men are cognisant comes from the action of physical forces in the inorganic world, and from the vegetal and animal creation. Electricity, for instance, is a destructive agent. The lightning strikes and causes death with a suddenness against which there could be no prevision. The tornado destroys houses and villages, utterly regardless of human interests. Vesuvius with its fiery rain extinguishes the flourishing cities at its base. On sea and land alike every year witnesses multitudes doomed to suffering and death through the force of natural agents, which cannot be avoided or controlled. Not less true is this when we look for causes higher in the organic scale. Upas trees there may not be, but poison as deadly as the upas lurks around the Villa Borghese or along the luxuriant banks of the Amazon. Neither the tiger nor the serpent knows any mercy or pity. Even in the crowded streets of a great metropolis the mad steer tramples under foot the terror-stricken child. Everywhere in nature there are all the time occurring, as the results of natural causes, events which, if we only could, we would prevent or avoid.

Over and above this so-called Physical Evil there exists evil which is derived from the conduct of sentient beings, or (if we include the acts of the animal creation below man in the same general category with manifestation of inorganic force) from the conduct of human beings. Such is commonly termed Moral Evil. The distinction thus drawn is very generally accepted, and marks two grand divisions of the subject now before us.

Evil is still evil, whether it be physical or moral, and as such is an object for abatement; but, so far as mankind is concerned, the two sorts are very differently viewed. Man is commonly regarded as responsible for moral evil inasmuch as he is considered the voluntary cause of it, with the power, if only he chose, to prevent its existence. That it still continues to exist is consequently not alone man's misfortune, but directly his fault. Thus

of this kind it is a relief to the author, and, I think, to the reader, to change occasionally from the singular to the plural and back again. This plan is, therefore, followed in the present book.

a peculiar character attaches itself to moral evil, separate and distinct from that pertaining to physical evil. Whether the current ideas as to the antithesis between the two classes are correctly entertained or not, and whether or not there is any intrinsic difference or difference in kind between the two are questions which will be discussed as we proceed. It is enough at present to note the claims generally made. Provisionally at least we may allow a distinction between physical and moral evil.

## CHAPTER II.

*DIFFERENT THEORIES OF EVIL.*

BEFORE proceeding to consider further the phenomena which we call evil or of evil nature, it may be well to note what the human mind has thought with regard to evil in explanation of its existence. I do not intend to review in detail the tenets of the various schools of philosophy, or the creeds of the different religious sects or other bodies on this subject; but in the light of what has been held to exhibit the leading ideas which it is possible for us to entertain with respect thereto.

It has been most usual to connect evil with the supernatural, and therefore the problem of evil has been very largely a religious problem. Evil is certainly interwoven with nature's order throughout; and if from nature we look for a source or a cause of the natural processes and nature's evolution in a supernatural, to this supernatural must we go for a source and a cause of evil. Assuming this to be the case, we strike at once upon that very old and very serious question, referred to in the preceding chapter. How can an all-powerful and all-holy God be the author of evil? Epicurus states the difficulty: Either God wishes to prevent evil and cannot; or He can and will not; or He neither will nor can; or He both can and will. In the first case He is weak and not omnipotent; in the second He is wicked; in the third He is both weak and wicked; in the fourth we are impelled to ask, How is evil at all possible? <sup>1</sup>

If, then, an all-powerful and all-holy God is not the author of evil, we are first driven over to the Manichæans or, further back, to the Zoroastrian system. 'In the beginning, there was,' said Zarathrustra, 'a pair of twins—two spirits, each having his own distinct essence. These, the Good and the Evil, rule over us in thought, word, and deed.'<sup>2</sup> There are two Gods, or two Principles, in the supernatural world, each self-existent, and the two struggling

<sup>1</sup> Lactantius, *De Ira Dei*, chap. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Hymn from the Avesta; Bunsen, *God in History*, i. 280.

against each other for the supernatural supremacy and for the control of the universe. Both of these beings are certainly gods—*Aura-Mainyus* no less than *Ahura-Mazda*. The former is the source and the cause of Evil, the latter the source and cause of all Good.

There is, however, a middle ground, be it well or ill taken. The Divine Being may be supposed to be infinite in power, goodness, and holiness, and yet for good purposes permit the existence of evil supernatural beings—*Satan* and his followers—through whom and from whom all that is evil emanates. This distinguishes the Christian doctrine of the Devil from the Persian and the Manichean dualism. With these latter the strife between the powers of Good and Evil is eternal; in the Christian scheme it is only temporal, to end in the complete triumph of good. ‘And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.’<sup>1</sup> The queries which immediately suggest themselves in connection with this theory are, Whence came the Devil originally? Why is he permitted to exist, and evil to flow from him and his works?

As an answer to the last query, there is still another view of the supernatural origin of evil, but which may occur either with or without the notion of a personal devil. This is the doctrine that all evil is only good in the making. What we esteem to be bad in the universe is imperfection not yet made perfect. Could we know the secrets of the Divine Mind, we should perceive that what we now condemn, reject, and avoid, is only a necessary stage in the development of God’s most beneficent purposes. Thus argued Dr. William King, Archbishop of Dublin,<sup>2</sup> and the brothers Samuel and John Clarke (the two latter in the Boyle lectures). They stood, however, always upon the Christian basis of evil and evil powers permitted in furtherance of God’s beneficent purposes, and they also insisted upon the distinction between moral and physical evil; with the former going the doctrine of man’s responsibility to God. Indeed, it is obvious that we must draw sharp distinctions here. For, if evil be only good in the making, then it may be asked with the Epicureans, How is evil possible? That which we call evil is not evil, but imperfect good. Is there, then, any warrant for assuming a particular character for moral evil by which any taint of sinfulness attaches to the perpetrator of that which, bad as it may seem, is but crude goodness?

<sup>1</sup> Revelation of S. John xx. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *De Origine Mali*.

To avoid such a result, which to them seemed subversive of their whole system of revealed religion, the Christian theologians and moralists invented the doctrine that although evil was permitted by God to exist for His own wise and good purposes, yet man has been created wholly free to choose between the good and the evil. When therefore man does choose evil, he is the cause and the source of the evil conduct. For moral evil, therefore, man is responsible and accountable, although it may be that his wrong conduct is instigated by supernatural beings of satanic character, and although this evil may exist by God's own permission to the end of working out His own holy purposes in the end.

Archbishop King distributed evils into three classes : (1) 'Those of imperfection ; (2) natural ; (3) moral. The same division was made by Dr. Samuel Clarke, and this is his argument and explanation, in brief. 'Liberty implying a *natural* power of doing evil as well as good ; and the imperfect nature of finite beings making it possible for them to abuse this their liberty, to the actual commission of evil ; and it being necessary to the order and beauty of the whole, and for displaying the infinite wisdom of the Creator, that there should be different and various degrees of creatures, whereof consequently some must be *less perfect* than others ; hence there necessarily arises a possibility of evil, notwithstanding that the Creator is infinitely good. In short, thus : All that we call evil is either an evil of imperfection, as the want of certain faculties and excellences which other creatures have ; or natural evil, as pain, death, and the like ; or moral evil, as all kinds of vice. The first of these is not properly an evil.' 'A deficiency in powers and faculties is an evil to any creature no more than their never having been created would have been (*sic*). 'The second kind of evil is either a necessary consequence of the former, or it is counterpoised in the whole with as great or greater good ; or it is to be regarded as of the nature of punishment, in which case it is a necessary consequence of moral evil. As to this last, it arises wholly from the abuse of liberty, given for other purposes, and designed to contribute to the order and perfection of creation. In this case it is that all sorts of evils have entered the world, yet without prejudice to the infinite goodness of the Creator and Governor thereof.'<sup>1</sup> This doctrine is further elaborated by Dr. John Clarke. Following out the explanation of moral evil,

<sup>1</sup> I take these extracts from Gillett, *God in Human Thought*, chap. xxxvii. The first extract is quoted by this author from Clarke, the rest is an abstract.



the latter maintains that 'certain irregularities in the moral world follow from the finite nature of things.' Yet an analysis of the faculties and powers of the soul shows that each is individually good, and that whatever evil belongs to it belongs to it as infinite. It is subjected to moral law, and this is required by its nature. If it violates that law it is its own fault, and hence the cause of every moral evil in the world is 'the abuse of that liberty with which God endued every man.' Yet this liberty is itself an excellent gift. It is essential to rational life and its enjoyments. To withdraw it would degrade man to an animal or a machine.'<sup>1</sup>

The foregoing are the chief of what may be called the theological explanations of evil—those which look to a supernatural source and cause. In distinction from these we will instance what may be termed the scientific explanations of evil. They do not assume to reach the ultimate source and cause of its phenomena, believing that this is beyond the sphere of human knowledge. They exhibit the facts of individual and social life which give rise to the opposition between the good and the bad, and in generalising these facts attempt to find the proximate causes of the ills we experience. In this search, conducted upon such a principle, it is not to be expected that nature will be transcended. A supernatural may be postulated, but it is an unknowable supernatural. The evil that is made the subject of science is the evil which is in nature; and under this term are included the phenomena of mind both in their individual isolation and in their relations to other minds. It is my purpose in the present work to treat the problem of evil upon this method, being persuaded that much more sure and satisfactory results can be attained than by starting out from any of the theological hypotheses. In the course of our examination, however, we shall have occasion to comment upon some of these latter theories.

We will hence not stay to discuss the doctrines which have been briefly mentioned in this chapter, but will proceed without further preface to analyse the theme of our discourse.

<sup>1</sup> Gillett, *op. cit.*

## CHAPTER III.

*EVIL AND PAIN.*

I HOPE I shall not be considered as taking an unwarrantable liberty in assuming that evil is relative exclusively to conscious or sentient beings. For my own part, I am not able to understand how there can be any sentience without consciousness; but if there be those who think this possible, I am willing to stretch my statement so as to cover all cases of sentience. But, in any event, if there were no sentient beings there would be neither good nor evil. Of course it is equally true that there would be no experience whatever; the narrower truth, however, is sufficient for present uses. If, then, evil be invariably something which relates to sentient beings, it is something which concerns the mental part of those beings, for, given sentience, there are at least the rudiments of a mind, and sentience, as just remarked, is essential to the existence of evil.

If we were asked what we mean by a sentient being, we should probably say a being which *feels*. Feeling is one of the inseparable aspects of consciousness, of which knowledge and volition are commonly counted as the other two. A creature low down in the animal scale may have feeling, but cognition is at a minimum. Its sentience (which we infer) is the sole mental characteristic of which we are able to take account. There are sundry evidences of feeling, much more pronounced than any of intelligence. This feeling is evinced by the sensibility of the animal or its responsiveness to impressions from without. In addition to this there is an automatic mobility which initiates action of the organism upon the environment. In a word, the feeling which is indicated is that sort of feeling we ordinarily term *sensation*, which arises in connection with the action and reaction of the organic integer and its surrounding world.

We only know what feeling is by a reference to our individual experience. By feeling we mean, then, feeling as it is in human consciousness. Whether or not we believe that the rhizopoda have

feeling; if they do have any, it is feeling as we conscious human beings have feeling in our own experience—not, indeed, as completely, not to the same degree, but in the same kind. So all along the scale of sentience, up or down, from the lowest organisms to the most highly developed intelligence, there is at any rate feeling in the form of sensation.

Now all that evil which we have termed *physical*, and which Archbishop King and the Clarkes called *natural*, is something which primarily affects sensation. We should not know it to be evil were it not for the fact that it produces a sensational experience. Moreover, we have in a radical difference in quality of sensational experiences a natural means of determining that which is physically evil and that which is physically not evil. Sensations are either pleasurable, or painful, or indifferent. Pain is the index of physical evil. That which hurts me I esteem to be evil. Of course this is not the whole of even physical evil, for my neighbour or my race may be injured where I am not, and I unhesitatingly include under evil things the causes of their injury. But to the extent just noted, I hardly think there will be serious dispute or dissent raised by anybody over my propositions.

Let us proceed a little farther. Pain is the index of present physical evil. As intelligence grows we distinguish and define the objects which cause pain. More than that, we remember them. We also form associations from resemblances, and draw inferences with regard to the hurtfulness of things about us. A man does not need to be struck by lightning to know that lightning will do him bodily injury. In proportion to the degree of their intelligence sentient beings organise knowledge so that they form classes of things which they esteem likely to be sources of physical evil, and to which they give an evil character. These things are regarded as proximate agents of evil.

In a similar manner certain actions come to be regarded as causes of physical evil. The burnt child learns that putting his hand in the fire will bring harm to him. Pain teaches men the avoidance of destructive and damaging agents. Foresight is rendered possible by memory and imagination, and schemes and courses of conduct thus secure a good or bad character as respects their relations to physical evil.

This generalisation of which I have been speaking is not merely with regard to what is beneficial or harmful to one individual, but rather to all. Objects or actions regarded as causes

of physical ills are so esteemed with respect to their relations to many, to mankind in general, or to all sentient beings, as the facts warrant the application. To be sure, what may be one man's poison may be another man's meat, but the investigation of nature and the operation of natural laws enables us to find out how far and under what conditions a given substance is poisonous, and under what circumstances and to whom it is nutritious. But in all of these cases the test is pain to somebody. A thing is evil so far forth as it produces pain to some sentient being, and its evil tendencies are esteemed to be such just in the ratio that they seem likely to cause pain. Thus far with reference to physical evil, and up to this point also I should hardly look for substantial dissent.

Inorganic forces, we may thus say, are evil, so far forth as their action produces, or tends to produce, pain to human beings; for we need not go beyond the sphere of human life, activity, and passivity. Setting aside for the moment all considerations of intelligence, it may be declared also that the organic forces of vegetal and animal life are evil in so far as they cause, or tend to cause, pain. In the natural or physical world, in material nature, those forces are evil which are distinctively pain-producing; and of those which produce both pleasure and pain, probably the great majority, their evil character attaches as they have a pain-producing effect or tendency, and departs when this effect ceases or this tendency is annulled.

I have already remarked that if there were no sentient beings there would be no such thing as either good or evil. I now add to this truism the further remark, which I think must be an equally obvious truth, that if there were only one sentient being in existence there would be only physical good and physical evil. I protest against this habit which obtains of calling any pain a physical pain, as if all pain were not wholly mental. The suffering is in my mind, not in my members; and yet we are forced to recognise the distinction, almost universally made, between the physical and the moral as applied to good and evil, with which this discussion started out in the first chapter. So far as we have gone we have only what is usually, though it appears to me faultily, termed physical evil. When, therefore, I say that if there were only one sentient being there would exist only physical evil, I mean to indicate that the form of evil we call moral arises from the relations of sentient beings to each other. If Adam were

living alone in the Garden of Eden upon a vegetable diet, with the rest of the animal creation absent, he might have pricked his feet upon the thorns or stumbled upon a stone; he might have been made ill by eating green apples, or he might have been chilled by a cold wind or rain; yet he would have neither suffered nor committed moral evil. It may be said, and would be maintained by many, that, if he had the companionship of the lower animals, in addition, still he would not know moral evil, since it is generally esteemed that these animals are things, not persons. But the moment Eve appears, then there is opportunity for moral good and evil. Indeed, there was a moral relationship before, according to the story, inasmuch as Adam knew, and had communication with, Jehovah. The essence of the matter is that the moral relationship is social, and grows out of the social state. This being so, moral evil, as we understand it, is derived from the conduct of human beings toward each other. Up to this point, again, it seems to me there is substantial agreement. 'Force and right,' said Joubert, 'rule all things in the world; force before right arrives;' upon which President Seelye makes the very pertinent comment, 'but right has already arrived when men have come.'<sup>1</sup>

If, then, moral evil in its objective existence, to take this case first, be something which springs from the conduct of human beings to each other, such evil, of course, must be evil *to* someone. It must be thought, word, or deed which is hurtful to some person. Now let us see what the experience of such a person must be. There has been discovered no way of reaching human consciousness from without except through sensations. The hurtful conduct, then, of my neighbour must affect me through my sensations. This evil thought must manifest itself in action which may be word or deed, as we commonly say, though the word spoken is as much a deed as the blow struck. The injury may be a direct assault upon my person with the fist, the knife, the pistol, or the vial of poison. The evidence to me of the injury committed is the sensation of pain. The evil is not different, so far as I am concerned, from the evil which comes from the falling rock, or from eating fortuitously the poisonous herb. To me it is physical evil. Again, the injury may be against my property, my person supposably not being harmed. In this instance I either have or have not feeling. The cognition of the injury may be accompanied with indifferent feelings,

<sup>1</sup> 'Dynamite as a Factor in Civilisation,' *North American Review*, July 1883.

but then the injury is slight. If there be more feeling, there is either pleasure or pain. Now it is a contradiction to universal experience and absurd to say that injuries of any kind give pleasure to the person against whom they are perpetrated. To the extent that there is injury there is pain of some sort. In the case supposed there may be present discomfort or fear of consequences; often the latter. If a sneak thief steals my overcoat when I have temporarily laid it aside, my pain will be either present cold, perhaps prompting me to look for the article, or apprehension that I shall suffer further from being unable to supply its loss, or both. If my strong box is robbed, the pain is both present fears and horrible imaginings. But in any case the injury is marked by pain presentative or representative. Once more, the injury may be by spoken word or other action against my reputation. The characteristic effect in such case is painful emotion. The misfortunes and ill consequences of a bad reputation as my experience makes them plain are represented, and dread of their occurrence to me in some measure is aroused. The sense of injustice is very likely added. There is generated a mass of painful centrally-initiated feeling, the quantity of the emotion either pervasive, intense, prolonged, or recurrent, indicating my intellectual appreciation of the harm done or likely to ensue. Whatever form the injury may take, whatever shape the evil which results from the volition or conduct of another toward me, the sense of harm comes to my consciousness solely through a feeling of pain.

These truths thus familiarly illustrated are made more evident still by psychological examination. Our feelings are sensational or emotional, the latter being a mass of highly representative feelings. There are centres of mental power which resist inward influences and initiate outward movements; but the emotion which is generated from central sources is still feeling represented, whose origin was presentative or sensational experience. Indeed there is reason for the assertion that an emotion is a fusion of ento-peripheral sensations. Now if there be evil inflicted upon us, it must be evil to our consciousness. Feeling is the basis of consciousness, so to speak; we must then feel the evil. We have no other mode known to consciousness of distinguishing feeling of evil, harm, injury save by its quality of pain. Our feelings may be either sensational or emotional; but in either case this quality of pain marks the feeling of evil. It begins in the sensations and is an essential part of the represented sensations which we call emotions.

Evil to me, then, is inevitably and exclusively that which causes or is expected to cause pain, either sensational or emotional.

If, then, objective evil is the cause of subjective pain; by the ordinary processes of association and representation, we form our general ideas of such evil as being that which is or is likely to be a cause of pain to human beings. Of course the conditions of the social state at once apply, and by these what is really evil to one may be for the good of the many. This, however, is a balancing of good and evil, by which a less evil is endured or permitted to escape a greater, but it does not alter the essential character of evil itself. This latter, so far forth as it is evil, is so by virtue of the fact that it is a cause of pain.

Thus considering evil objectively, we are not able to discover any distinction between the moral and the physical. We have not, indeed, arrived at the grounds of the division to which we are compelled to give so much prominence. For this it is necessary to make an introspective examination into the motives of human volition and conduct. For, says Archbishop King, 'moral evil springs from human choice.' Remarks Principal Tulloch in substance, 'The essential evil does not come to man from without, but from within.'<sup>1</sup> But granting this, the situation is simply that man chooses to do evil when he might choose the good. We are not helped by this discovery to any additional light upon the subject of what evil itself is. On the contrary, we are brought directly back to the individual experience of the distinction between pleasure and pain. I choose to do evil; that is, I choose to do that which to someone is evil; that which is injurious, harmful, baneful, dangerous, hurtful, displeasing to somebody. I choose to do that which causes pain, or which may be a cause of pain to some other person. It does not seem possible to escape from the conclusion before reached that evil is nothing more or other than that which causes pain.

Therefore the distinction between physical and moral evil is one of the causes of evil, not of the nature of the evil itself. Evil which springs from certain sources and is produced by certain causes is physical, or natural, if we prefer the term of the Boyle lecturers; while evil derived from certain other sources and causes is moral. But evil itself, subjectively considered, is pain; and, objectively considered, is that which is, or may be, a cause of pain.

Having thus ascertained what evil itself is, according to the best of our ability, we may pursue a little farther this question of moral

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, p. 73.

evil, which, as we have just been able to remark, demands solely an investigation of the causes of evil. The statement of Archbishop King just cited furnishes the key to this examination. Moral evil springs from human choice. In the last chapter its general character was made evident; and now, connecting what we learned there with the results to which we have here arrived, we may say that moral evil is at any rate pain caused by human volition to cause pain. Yet that this is not an adequate definition is clear; for a parent may have a volition to chastise his disobedient child, and when the chastisement follows, we cannot call either the punishment, or the volition to punish, moral evil. It is rather the disobedience which calls for punishment that is the moral evil. What we mean by the latter is, evil which is caused by wrongful or unrighteous volitions to do that which is known to be pain-producing to some person in immediate result or in tendency. Intelligent choice to injure or displease another, when Unrighteous, produces moral evil. Human choice, as Dr. King and the Boyle lecturers maintained, is the foundation of moral evil—proximately at least. This choice must be intelligent choice to do that known to be pain-producing, positively or negatively. It must also be an unrighteous or wrongful choice, and whether or not it is unrighteous or wrongful depends upon the ethical system in vogue. Whatever determines right and wrong conduct will determine what is right or wrong choice.

Every ethical system is a method which primarily involves a limitation or restriction of the activity of one by the wants, desires, purposes of other similar beings. The individuality of one is restrained and conditioned by other individualities. There has been in the world's history much discussion over the true rule of moral action and great dispute about the ultimate principles of ethics. But on the whole scholars and students have ranged themselves in one of two groups: the first, those who believe in a Natural morality; the second, those who believe in an Artificial, or, as it is otherwise termed, a Supernatural morality. The former system recognises the organic unity of mankind, each individual being at the same time means and end of all the rest, and establishes its rule of right and wrong upon the basis of the general welfare. That conduct which conduces to the common happiness, the greatest good of the greatest number, is right; any other conduct is wrong. The rule of duty for the individual is to do as one would be done by, qualified by the necessities of self-preservation, and to some extent



self-development. The other system adopts to a very considerable degree the above precepts, but derives them from assumed or claimed divine commands and establishes their validity upon relations of man to a Divine Being. Natural morality tests everything by its value in promoting happiness. Artificial morality determines conduct and dispositions with relation to the supposed pleasure or displeasure of the Deity as the same is revealed through certain authoritative channels.

But whichever system be adopted, and whatever test be applied to conduct to determine its morality or immorality, moral evil is still pain caused by human volition. Not all pain caused by man's will is moral evil, since pain may be righteously inflicted; but that woe, unhappiness, distress, pain, which comes from unrighteous dispositions and choices, is included within the category. Evil, however, as suffered, is always pain, even if it be moral evil, the latter being only pain arising from certain peculiar causes.

## CHAPTER IV.

*THE EVOLUTION OF PAIN.*

IN its simplest forms pain is the sentient appreciation of disorganisation in the physical system. A cut, a bruise, a sting at the periphery, is followed by sensations of pain; so also an ento-peripheral lesion produces sensations of internal distress. The disorganisation may be positive or negative. The cases just instanced are of the first variety; but pain may also ensue from the lack of organising assimilating force. The creature which lies dying of starvation suffers from sensations of disorganisation as truly as one which is perishing from a wound. Life is a process of adjustment and adaptation of organism to environment. Where this adjustment is incomplete or imperfect, there is a tendency to dissolution and disintegration of the organism, more or less marked in the ratio that the imperfection of adjustment is exhibited. Wherever this disorganisation is initiated or continued, pain is present as the mental concomitant of physical degeneracy, until death ensues and the veil is drawn through which we cannot see.

Sensational pain varies in quantity. Its distinctive varieties, however, are not so much indicated by quantitative differences as by differences in the localities to which we ascribe the bodily source of the pain. A pain at the end of my finger, a sharp pang in my eye, a pinch upon the skin, a headache, a stomach-sickness are varieties of the indefinite number and kinds of painful sensations. But let us not fail to note that the heterogeneity so far as it exists depends upon the increase of intelligence. The more the mind distinguishes and defines, the greater the variety of pains we apprehend. This distinguishing and defining, however, is the exercise of intellectual power. The increase of such power depends upon an increase in complexity of the nervous system. A more complex nervous apparatus implies a relatively greater complexity of the whole organism in structure and function. The truth then becomes apparent that in all those things which concern quality, pain varies

with the degree of intelligence; that is, it is less definite, less heterogeneous, and less complex as intelligence is low. Respecting quantity, we are not so sure. How far intensity or pervasiveness of feeling can subsist with a minimum of cognition is not yet made certain; but with a limited range there appears to be a greater quantity with a less discrimination, and conversely. Below these indefinite limits I am inclined to believe that feeling is itself greatly lessened as intelligence is diminished.

The control of action by pleasure and pain as motives depends upon representation, which in turn requires discrimination and defining. I must remember the object to which I ascribed my pain, and in order to do this I must have had an originally definite perception of that object. Now the development of the representative powers is the index of the development of intelligence. So that it is as mental action increases in definiteness, complexity, and heterogeneity that pain as a factor in the determination of conduct is more certain, definite, and calculable.

It is in the process of this development that emotional pain comes to play its part. The most conspicuous form is fear, with its many varieties from diffidence and suspicion to the extremes of terror. Fear, however, springs from intellectual action. Our past experience may, when remembered, cause us to anticipate a recurrence of definite evils, or it may furnish us with the material out of which our imaginations may construct terrible phantoms to frighten us. Such apprehensions affect our actions, often controlling our conduct for long periods of time, sometimes changing the whole course of life. The anticipation of ills to occur in the future is certainly the cause of the most depressing feelings of emotional life. Anger also has an element of pain, but this even is rather from the admixture of fear—of the consequences, either of conflict or of abstinence from conflict, or both.

As intellectual development proceeds in the order of evolution the springs of emotional pain are multiplied as the objects which may become causes of pain become multifold. Association and representation reach farther, intellectual vision has a longer and a wider range. We see danger afar off, we connect more closely and more accurately present circumstances with evils to come. Alongside of this increase in power of association goes an increased power of prevision which enables men to avoid in a greater degree the harm they dread. The prudential virtues become more largely developed. In the course, however, that form of pain known as

care, solicitude, anxiety appears to a greater extent and exercises a powerful influence upon mental life. Terror and superstitious fear are lessened, but these other forms of fear, of which I have just been speaking, become prominent.

With the greater power of forecasting the future there arises in the course of mental evolution an increased susceptibility to that class of pains which may be indicated under the general term of *disappointments*. The more the mind anticipates the future, the more it constructs ideals for realisation in time to come, the more it dwells in a region of hope; so correspondingly it must suffer more keenly from the defeat of its plans, and the failure of its cherished expectations :

Of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these 'It might have been.'

The memory of such failures is peculiarly depressing, and tends to lower the vitality, especially as old age comes on, and there appears no further opportunity to repair the errors of the past or build upon the ruins of earlier constructions :—

Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye.

Despair exemplifies both disappointment over the past, and fear for the future.

Once more, a very important group of pains which appear in mental life as intelligence increases in definiteness, heterogeneity and complexity, are those which arise from the sympathies. Sympathy springs from the primitive pleasure of society, but sympathetic sentiments are not conspicuous where the intellectual development is at a low point. At the bottom in the scale of mental evolution antipathetic sentiment are in the ascendant; and, indeed, in human life where the militant spirit prevails sympathy is much deadened and blunted, sometimes nearly extirpated. But, generally speaking, when the representative power enables the mind to perceive the organic connection of society, the cognition of fellowship is enlarged. In the beginning the family life is certain to develop sympathetic sentiments to a high degree of intensity, though perhaps within a narrow range. When the coherences of the community, the tribe, the nation are established sympathetic feelings are extended. But whatever may be the part the sympathies play in the mental life of the individual, as they increase in potency, of course the ability to feel another's pain

as one's own is enhanced. We are more inclined to be moved, and may be made ourselves miserable by the woes of others. The mother's love is perhaps the most remarkable example of this ; but it is also found in the sorrow and griefs of a friend, or even in the misfortunes or the death of a public benefactor or hero whom we have never seen.

We must not fail to consider that the same progress of intelligence which multiplies the sources of emotional pain also provides new modes of relief and mitigation. This is, of course, implied. The conquest of pain indeed proceeds more rapidly than its development. This is merely saying that mankind grows wiser as the race grows older. In this fact lies all hope of progressive improvement, and the final reduction of both physical and moral evil to its lowest terms. Some of the methods of accomplishing this result we hope to indicate in subsequent pages.

Without other specific references, in conclusion it may be said that the evolution of pain as feeling proceeds from the presentative to the representative and re-representative as intelligence grows in definiteness, heterogeneity and complexity. Upon sensational pain is superinduced reproduced sensational and emotional pain, the extent, variety and degree of both the latter being dependent upon development of the representative power in its reminiscent, conceptive, discursive and constructive exercises.

## CHAPTER V.

*THE OFFICES OF EVIL.*

THE final cause of pain humanity is not competent to know, and a search therefor would be wholly barren of results. The part which pain plays in mental experience we are able to ascertain to some extent. The office of sensational pain, at least, is to give information of disintegration and dissolution in the physical system. Its effect is to stimulate action to remove the cause of the pain ; but if the efforts at removal are unsuccessful, and the pain continues, it depresses the vitality and extinguishes motion. Pain is first a warning friend, then a tyrannical master. In short, pain is the mental concomitant of disintegration and dissolution of the organism while life lasts. It is a motive to action to remove the pain or cause of pain.

Life may be painlessly extinguished. This is usually done suddenly by violent means, or by the slow action of anæsthetics. In either of these cases pain gives no warning of approaching death. But in the normal and natural movement of the forces of evolution and dissolution it is an efficient monitor of danger to the bodily integrity. It shows the absence of that adjustment of organism to environment upon which the maintenance of life depends, and stimulates to an attempted attainment of the necessary harmony.

The cases in which pain is itself a benefit, as for instance when producing pleasure through stimulation, do not militate against this view. A bitter taste in the mouth is certainly disagreeable, but the quinine which caused it tones up the whole system. Yet in all such instances the pain as pain is still a mark of lack of assimilation, which must be followed by expulsion or by disorganisation, if continued. When, however, the lack of assimilation is succeeded by a better assimilation, all we can say is to repeat the very old truth that it is not safe to trust wholly to first appearances. A moderate degree of pain in one quarter may be useful to prevent a greater somewhere else. The disorganisation at the surface caused by a mustard plaster is not any the less disorganisation,

though it be applied to prevent the greater destruction from the inflammation within.

The same law as to the office of pain holds good when we pass from the presentative to the representative. Continued pain, whether presentative or representative, is followed by great loss of vitality. Everyone knows how many human beings die from mental anxiety and distress of one sort or another. Brooding over past misfortunes and dreading evils expected to happen, sympathetic grief over the misfortunes of others, invariably prostrate the energies to a greater or less degree according to the weakness or strength of the individual, and the quantity—extent, intensity, or duration—of the deteriorating causes. That form of evil commonly known as mental pain is more apt to affect unfavourably the brain, or those organs which are supported by the sympathetic system of nerves. In addition to direct effects there are, of course, all the indirect effects coming from alterations of conduct through the emotional disturbances.

I have alluded to the fact that the effect of pain is in the first instance to stimulate action to get rid of the pain, by removing the cause. Effort may also be made to remove one's self from the sphere of action of that cause. As stated in the first chapter, we mean by the word evil that which we desire to avoid, ward off, escape from, prevent. The same thing is to be said of pain. Now then, it may happen that to prevent or escape pain we may even go so far as to destroy life itself. Suicide presents itself as a means of avoidance, the assumption being in such case that death will be a cessation of pain—

Where the wicked cease from troubling,  
And the weary are at rest.

The force of present or anticipated evil may be so great as to cause the encountering of a greater present pain in preference to anticipated ills, or in preference to an expected continuance of evils already upon us. Where a Nirvana of rest is believed in for existence beyond the grave, or even when annihilation is expected, suicide is often advocated as a blessed relief. The doctrine of eternal punishment after death for the wicked, in a contrary manner, operates as a deterrent, because, to use a homely phrase, it seems to the sufferer to be jumping from the frying pan into the fire.

To the individual, therefore, pain has its beneficial uses to a degree. So far as it serves the purposes of a sentry to warn

against impending danger, it is an advantage. But beyond this it is the enemy of individual welfare and life. As a means of education it is good within a limited range. Otherwise it is an evil, in fact, evil itself.

The social condition of mankind creates social organisms. To declare generally a truth to be afterwards amplified—mutual interdependence produces the sentiment that the common good is to be aimed at and secured, not the benefit of the individual alone. Hence it is sometimes the case that the interest of society is so far antagonistic to the welfare of the individual that even the destruction of the latter may be desirable for the benefit of the former. That which is evil to the one may be good for the many. This is on substantially the same principle exemplified in the case of pain inflicted upon the individual at his own election, in order to prevent greater evil. Better cut off an offending right hand than to ruin the whole body. As in this last situation so also in the social organism, when evil becomes pervasive enough to affect a large number of individuals, or the whole, then it becomes destructive of the organic integrity.

The social organism is made up of individuals. Evil to or in the organism is evil in or to some individual member of that organism. When, therefore, we say that it is for the good of the whole that an offending member be cut off, we mean that it is for the good of many, or most of the individuals comprising the society that evil happen to one, on the principle above stated.

It is out of this antagonism of individual interest and social interest that evil as a social phenomenon to be eradicated presents itself. To begin with, such evil arises from the antagonisms and competitions of individuals; then, as the idea of the organic unity of mankind grows, this constraint of the will of all upon the one makes itself more and more manifest and in resistance to this, evil arises. The choice of individuals inclining toward the injury of others, then against the welfare of the whole social organism, through conduct calculated to affect it, is the root and source of evil in society.

It will be found on examination that evil in the social relations accomplishes the same results as upon the individual organism. Where the conduct of any individual toward another, or toward others, is of such a character as to work injury to the integrity of the social organism, each of whose parts is at the same time the means and end of all the rest, then such conduct is symptomatic



of danger, and must be restrained, repressed, or punished. If this last is not done, but evil conduct be allowed to continue and to spread, the social organism is destroyed, and a state of war ensues, wherein each person defends himself and secures his ends as best he may.

Since the social organism is wholly made up of individuals, whatever tends to bring happiness to individuals is intrinsically of advantage to society; on the contrary, whatever tends to bring pain upon individuals is in itself bad. The only limitation in any individual case is the claims of other individuals; and this limitation makes the infliction of pain on others often praiseworthy and necessary. It will be remembered that we spoke of moral evil as that form of evil produced by an intelligent unrighteous choice to injure or displease another. The righteousness or unrighteousness is determined by the law of the social organism. It will be seen, therefore, that while evil must happen to some individuals in a society, and this beneficially to the whole organism; yet moral evil is totally, absolutely opposed and inimical to the social unity.

Physical evil must necessarily always exist while organic life remains constituted as it is. So long as the individual life perishes and the body returns to dust there will be pain. Whether moral evil will ever wholly disappear from the world is a more complicated question. The egoistic sentiments which are at its root become less controlling as mankind progresses in civilisation, while the altruistic, upon which depend the social order, are growing stronger. But the energies impelling to self-centred development are tremendous. Moreover, even if the disposition to do right exists, it is not easy always to determine what is right conduct. The total disappearance of moral evil, therefore, is something we can hardly dare to hope for; in reality, it seems impossible in a social organism made up of growing, developing individuals that some conduct should not occur which is animated by an utter disregard for the welfare of the many, or by a desire to injure another for self-gratification. But such conduct can be very closely restrained, and the desire can be reduced within comparatively harmless limits. This is what civilisation is doing, and much more in the same direction may not unreasonably be expected for the future. The world is surely growing better, and there is no justification for pessimistic forebodings. They may be indulged in as a luxury by people who enjoy pleasures of that fashion, but they are not healthy and have for a basis only a very superficial seeming of truth.

## CHAPTER VI.

*THE ULTIMATE ORIGIN OF EVIL.*

WE know that pain is a universal concomitant of mind, so far as we are able to make mind a subject of science. To the same degree, within the limitations of our knowledge, life and mind are correspondent. In order to explain the ultimate origin of pain we should be obliged to explain the ultimate origin of mind and life. This science has never been able to accomplish. And if evil be pain, presentative or representative, we are thus baffled in our search for the ultimate origin of evil. We have no facts from which we can generalise. We do not know; and so far as human knowledge indicates anything at all, it is that the problem is insoluble and the mystery inscrutable. Whence evil comes and why it exists are beyond our ken.

In Chapter II. we noticed briefly the principal theological explanations of the origin of evil. So far as physical evil is concerned, they do not interfere with the advance of knowledge or the promotion of right conduct, unless where the doctrine held is, that it is impious to resist the will of the Deity when he chooses to scourge. Under such a doctrine, of course, both ignorance and apathy are encouraged. But, happily, the general religious sentiment in the most enlightened communities favours an activity to prevent and ward off physical pain—a pious submission, indeed, if it be necessary, but only when it is unavoidable, piety equally consisting in work to escape and provide against. Yet in no event is man regarded as responsible for the existence of physical evil as such. He may be culpable for his foolishness, because of his failure to use his best energies to ward off such evil, but the measure of his punishment is generally conceded to be the natural consequences of his acts and omissions. Now the scientific account of moral evil supports a similar doctrine with regard to its relations to human life. He who injures another is indeed responsible to his fellows for the injury done, and for the sake of preserving the

moral order punishment is inflicted; but the injury done or intended is always the measure of the guilt, and determines the extent of the penalty. Man is not in any other sense nor to any other degree accountable for moral evil. He is not in any wise responsible for its existence; but, having broken the law, the social and socially ordained consequences are the natural and the only penalties. On the other hand, the theological views of evil make moral evil to consist in sin in the heart of man, a violation of God's law, a guilt worthy of endless punishment, for which man is absolutely responsible to God as an originator of this evil. There may be a supernatural power which tempts man to go astray, but if he yields, as he always does, he is absolutely at fault and worthy of the highest condemnation. This appalling notion has had such a vast influence upon human life and conduct that I shall devote a subsequent part of this work to its special consideration, and thus need not dwell upon the subject here. In subsequent pages I shall present reasons tending to show that the doctrine in question is not only untrue, but is obstructive of moral progress and prejudicial to the best order.



PART II.

THE ELIMINATION OF EVIL.

‘For the individual man there is no radical cure for the evils to which human nature is heir outside of human nature itself. . . . . Our healing is not in the storm or in the whirlwind, it is not in monarchies, or aristocracies, or democracies, but will be revealed by the still small voice that speaks to the conscience and the heart, prompting us to a wider and a wiser humanity.’

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, *Address on Democracy*.

## CHAPTER VII.

*THE PROBLEM OF HAPPINESS.*

THOUGH we cannot expect wholly to extirpate evil while human nature is constituted as it is, still from this very constitution we are for ever compelled to aim at its avoidance and prevention. Certain it is, indeed, that we cannot always prevent and avoid, but it is equally sure that we can succeed in such attempts to an extent whose limits are undefined and appear to become farther and farther removed as we approach them. In the preceding part of this work we directed our attention to the Problem of Evil as a problem of intellectual determination of the nature of evil and its relations to sentient existence. The reader is now invited to consider the question as one whose solution primarily concerns the regulation of conduct. We are thus to regard more closely the bearings of evil upon volition and action, and of these latter, in turn, upon evil.

In view of the considerations already advanced, it seems obvious that the great end of human activity with reference to the subject before us must be to minimise evil. If we cannot wholly cast it out from experience, but can to an indefinite degree guard against it, forestall or counteract; and if we must perforce of our nature always be labouring for this result, the end of endeavour just stated is plainly presented. We are to seek how to reduce the amount of evil from which we must suffer to the lowest possible limits.

This is an end which you, reader, must all the time be proposing to yourself. Your actions inevitably must, consciously or unconsciously, be directed toward the avoidance of evil, and if you intelligently follow a course which will bring pain upon you, it is only because you expect a resultant satisfaction which to you is of more value than the pleasure you will lose or the pain you will incur by such a course.

It is an ultimate fact, which neither you nor I nor anyone

else can otherwise explain, that the individual does not wish harm to befall him, except as the means to good. It is an early experience of everyone that evil does come to him from the voluntary action of other human beings. It is, therefore, a matter of interest to you and to me and to every other, that not only physical evil but moral evil be eliminated and prevented. When another individual does anything which harms, or which has a tendency, directly or indirectly, to harm you or me, an interest at once exists, naturally and because we are living beings, to prevent, avoid, or counteract that harm; and since all injurious action on the part of others proceeds either from ignorance, carelessness, or positive malevolence, it is of the highest importance that such an impression be made upon others, that their intelligence, feelings, and will shall combine to direct their actions so that they themselves shall not inflict harm or do that which tends to bring evil upon you and me. This is the problem of the elimination of evil as regards the individual alone. All else is but means to an end.

In order to effect the desired result so far as the action of human beings is concerned, we must know something of their nature; this we can only determine by observation, which leads us to analogical reasoning based upon our own consciousness and introspective examination of ourselves. Upon making such an examination we find at the outset that the pressure of appetitive urgencies must be so strong that these creatures about us we call human beings will inflict harm upon us, or will have the disposition to do so (unless those urgencies are satisfied), either if we have the means to satisfy and withhold or if we are in any wise an obstacle to satisfaction. At least it is necessary for our advantage (the reader's and mine as individuals, we will suppose) that these human creatures be restrained from harm, and the most effectual way to prevent them from entertaining evil intentions under such circumstances is to supply their wants.

But, still observing and reasoning analogically, we find that it is not enough merely to satisfy the selfish primary appetites—like that of hunger, for instance. Men propose ends to themselves, the attainment of which reaches far into the future. They concern not merely the present need, but probable or possible future wants; they hence involve not alone a single action but a course of action, tending to create habits and governing dispositions. We must take into consideration for our own security all the influences



which are likely to affect character. This is a perplexing and troublesome matter.

We may say we will do nothing, but will keep ourselves aloof from other human beings, relying upon our strength if attacked, and perhaps indulging the hope that they will rend each other and let us alone. Yet this is a very dangerous course; it does not contribute to peace of mind, and by no means is fruitful in happy results when actually tried. The same inclination which prompts them to slaughter each other is liable to turn them against us. Again we can resolve ourselves to attack, in the hope to exterminate as many as possible and to intimidate the rest. This plan, too, is open to objections. Instead of ourselves killing the others off they may kill us off. Grave risks will be run, and the issue is at best uncertain. Better to sit still and continue to smile in the hope of softening their hearts.

Experience has amply proved the superiority of this last method, or an extension of it. If we can teach other people to have regard for the interests and the welfare of their fellowmen, we shall, at the outset, be more secure ourselves and less exposed to all that class of evils which we have called moral. And not merely this. We have thus far been looking only to the negative side; but there is a positive side to be regarded. It is better that others shall be encouraged to refrain from injury. It is much more advantageous if they can be brought actively to assist us. In view of this, of still greater importance does it become to control the ends and dispositions of our fellows.

These dispositions could manifestly be best governed and directed toward the desired end, if only we could create in individuals such a natural constitution that each one should find his greatest pleasure in the pleasure of others. Then through himself he would continually be stimulated, of his own spontaneous activity, to remove evil, and the causes of evil, from the life and environment of those with whom he should be brought in contact. The misfortunes of others would be a source of pain to him, while his own ends of life could only be achieved in the happiness of others. And if the individual could be induced at least to hold up before him such an ideal of life as an end of achievement, something would certainly be gained of advantage to others, even though he should fail perfectly to realise his own aim because of the pressure of egoistic urgencies.

This, though a difficult work, is not impossible. In the first

place there is in the human constitution a primary pleasure in the amicable presence of others of one's kind. There exists an appetite for society which brings human beings together. We thus have an ally at the outset in human nature itself. Again, the perpetuation of the race depends upon the appetite of sex which draws two persons together with a power at times almost irresistible. And in the third place, the natural instinct of maternal affection (with paternal also, though in less degree) is characteristically self-forgetful, and sometimes absolutely and uncompromisingly so. We have thus natural gregariousness which cannot be maintained without some degree of altruism ; sexuality involving altruistic desires or appetite ; parental affection leading to altruistic conduct. Therefore we find as a basis for the development of the altruistic ideal and character instinctive aggregations of individuals, in whom, however imperfectly, altruism is apprehended as desirable and to some extent practised. Sympathy, or an ability to share in some manner the feelings of others, appears as a natural susceptibility and the still more powerful emotion of love is exhibited as a constitutional trait.

Now, it will be of little avail to you, the reader, and to me, who are now simply consulting our own interests, if only here and there an individual be found in whom have been formed an ideal of life and a disposition for conduct which impel him to help, or at least not to hurt, his fellowmen. It is necessary that these safeguards against harm be multiplied as often as possible. We cannot rest free from apprehension until everybody whom we are likely to meet is at least put under some sort of self-restraint of the altruistic nature. The more thorough and the more prevailing the altruism the better. Therefore, everywhere and in all men we must seek to develop the altruistic character for the sake of our own interests.

We have thus before us revealed as a social state desirable for the interest of us, who are observing, a condition wherein each derives his greatest happiness from the happiness of others and is animated by a ruling disposition to promote that happiness. If this state of society could be realised we should have the most favourable conditions possible for securing, so far as human effort can accomplish it, the abolition of pain generally, and we should dry up at the very sources themselves the springs of all moral evil. Consequently each individual will regard it as the most important social desideratum that as many people as possible be inspired by altruistic ideals and governed by altruistic dispositions.

We have already noted as evident that the altruistic disposition will not ordinarily and naturally stand in the face of the urgencies of self-preservation. Under the pressure of starvation men will prefer themselves to their neighbours, and be incapable of thinking of anything else, or seeking anything else but their own relief. They will seek to remove their own pain first. I do not now take into account how far education may change this, but am considering the facts as they are, normally and generally. Hence a prime requisite to the development of the altruistic spirit is to satisfy the primary urgencies of human nature, at least to the extent necessary for the individual's conservation. For like reasons it is of value, though not so indispensable, that the desires of individuals beyond the primary appetites be gratified or allowed gratification so far as they do not in their fulfilment work the injury of others. We mentioned in Chapter V. that it is intrinsically of advantage to society that the individuals composing society be happy, as far as possible. In a state of comfort and contentment there is less motive to the individual to harm others. If he is himself happy he will be more inclined both to permit and to promote the happiness of others, especially if this can be done with little sacrifice on his part. I am quite aware that there are important qualifications to be made here, and many interesting and serious questions relating to the effect of surrounding conditions on individual motives; but I think I am quite safe in enunciating as a general truth that the happier men are the more favourably disposed they are to the happiness of others; and beyond this we need not (at this stage) go. It may be said, indeed, that by experiences of suffering we are made more sympathetic to the woes of others. This is true in a measure, but this sympathy arises chiefly after our own pain is over, and in connection with the remembrance of it. While we are in trouble our thoughts and activities are concentrated upon the means for attaining our own relief. We have no leisure and little disposition to devote ourselves to the aid of others. Charity begins at home. It surely will not be contended that the best way to make people mindful of the dole of other human beings is to plunge them into a like condition of pain and keep them there. This is contrary to all experience.

Upon a foundation of some degree of security the altruistic character may successfully be built up. Negatively, we must allow self-conservation, and positively we must promote the development of the altruistic character. These two are really complementary.

If every person is careful of, and to some extent promoting, the happiness of others, the level of happiness will be raised, the amount of pain diminished; this fact in turn will beget more altruism, and thus the progress will go on. Altruism will tend to increase the general happiness, and this is the same thing as decreasing the general amount of pain. Hence the problem of the elimination of evil is identical with the problem of the promotion of happiness—increasing the excess of pleasure over pain.

We have thus far been viewing the abatement of evil from the point of view of one or two individuals—the reader and I, as having an identity of interest—who are examining the enviroing conditions of life solely with reference to egoistic ends. It is inevitable that in a society of human beings each individual should, from motives such as I have indicated, come to entertain an idea, more or less elaborated, of the desirability of altruism on the part of other people. It is for his interest that there should be an altruistic order governing the conduct of others toward him. And, except where his interest conflicts with that of another, it is preferable that altruistic conduct prevail, since this lessens the probability of malevolence and maleficence toward him. But when you and I have gone far enough to understand this and to fully appreciate its truth, are we able to avoid recognising that we also are individuals, integral parts of the social *régime*, and applying, however reluctant we may be to do so, the same precepts to ourselves and our own conduct that we do to others? Besides, we have the same natural altruistic inclinations as others. And above all, we discover that others are requiring the same dispositions and conduct of us that we are requiring of them. Thus, having dictated to everybody else a law of the subordination of egoistic ends to altruistic and social, solely from motives of our own interest, we find ourselves under the domination of the same law. In the meshes of the net we have spread for others we behold ourselves hopelessly entangled.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*THE MORAL LAW.*

By a process like that which has been outlined in the last chapter arises the Moral Law, without which society could not exist. Hence come the notions of Right and Wrong as affecting conduct, based upon notions of Good and Evil as ends, themselves derived from experiences of Pleasure and Pain, presentative and representative. What is wrong under the Moral Law is Moral Evil, and what is right is Moral Good. And in determining what is right and wrong we must have reference to what is morally Good and Evil for our own standard or gauge.

The first requisite of a moral science is a determination of what is ethically Good and Evil. The second requisite is a determination of the best methods to secure the Good and eliminate and prevent the Evil. With this last are connected rules of right and wrong conduct. The conclusions of moral science give us, then, the mandates of moral law.

We have already maintained that each individual seeks his own happiness, that is to say, directs his actions toward the avoidance of pain and the experience of pleasure. It would be foolish for us to claim that the individual ought to aim at securing painful experiences and avoiding pleasurable ones, that he ought to live for the sake of enduring torture, or, perhaps, commit suicide by a painful mode of death. No person will naturally do this, and the only ground upon which he can be made to do anything like it is some anticipated pleasure of a future world for himself, or perhaps others, or some pleasure which he takes in the good of other beings in this. Left to himself, unaffected by other sentient beings, we have no warrant for supposing anything but that the individual would seek for pleasure and avoid pain, would aim at his own happiness. We are conscious (each to himself) that we seek our own happiness, and that we have no power to do anything else, except as we are willing in some way to limit it on account of other sentient beings.

It would thus be purposeless and altogether futile for us to attempt to modify the activity of individuals, except with regard to the benefit of others. If, then, the sole limitation upon the volition and action of one is the happiness of others, the Chief Good as determining the moral law of the community is the highest happiness of each, taking in view the happiness of others—or, as I have already stated it, the maximum happiness of the greatest number. This is the ultimate end to be gained in the government of conduct. Whatever tends toward securing this result is *good*, of good character, of a goodly nature, of good report. On the contrary, whatever tends to prevent or oppose is *evil*, of evil nature, report, or character. Conduct, therefore, of the first description is *Right*; that of the latter description is *Wrong*.

Let us now once more direct our attention to the fact already noted that, in order to obtain this social desideratum of happiness, individuals must be so moulded as to develop the altruistic character. They must be inspired by the social ideal—not, of course, unqualified altruism, but altruism as a means to the social end. They must be so educated as to have a preference *for* the right and a disposition to *do* right. But it is impossible for any human being to come into existence, under present conditions at any rate, without self-regarding tendencies. Consequently, under the stimulus of these impulses which have self for their end and the pressure of the social environing influences, assisted by natural sympathetic inclinations, are born two sets of tendencies, creating two sets of volitional motives, which, though sometimes coalescent, are generally conflicting. On the one hand, are the motives to self-preservation and self-conservation, with self as the end of volition and activity; on the other, are the motives to self-abnegation or self-forgetfulness, with the good of others as that end. As the one are indulged, so far forth as the influence is unmodified, it tends toward an egoistic character; so far forth as the latter are followed, the effect is favourable to the development of the altruistic. To the degree that the motives of the former class are uncounteracted they will create volitions and lead to actions which, in their reactions upon the character, will develop egoistic sentiments with egoistic ends; and as these last are made more general and controlling, the person's ideals of life will be pervaded by egoism and will become prevailingly egoistic. To such a person self will be the end of all his activity, in whatever direction he may choose to exert it, and everything will be good

which favours self, while everything will be indifferent or bad which does not conduce to the benefit of self, or which positively detracts from selfish satisfaction. In such a case the moral imperatives are of no force or weight, save as by heeding the requirements of the social order selfish interests are promoted. In the extreme exemplification of this character there is no voluntary submission to the moral law, much less any active disposition to conform to it.

But where the altruistic motives are continually strengthened, in similar manner but with contrary effect, altruistic sentiments and altruistic ends are developed, and with these altruistic ideals of life, whose distinguishing feature is self-forgetfulness, with the pursuit of subordinate ends of altruistic nature—the advantage, good, or happiness of others, one, a few or many, as the range of regard is narrower or wider. Then when egoistic impulses come into conflict with these altruistic motives, if the former are yielded to, a sense of wrong-doing, of unworthiness, of sorrow or remorse is generated, while if they are conquered, a feeling of right-doing, elation and self-approval ensues.

An individual in the formation of personal ends constructs in imagination a fiction of himself in a certain state or condition of experience with relation to things and other persons. Intellectually considered, this picture may be one of himself with his attention directed outward, or with his attention directed inward. (1) He may represent himself as witnessing his family, his companions, his neighbours, his country, in a state of prosperity, happiness, general weal, with pain at a minimum; and, secondarily, may represent himself as having contributed to this result and done nothing to hinder it. Further than this he may form no picture of his own condition. This is the purely *Altruistic* ideal end. It will be greatly varied according to the range of objects embraced, and its value correspondingly affected. A person will not satisfy the moral law by proposing as an end the happiness of his family irrespective of the happiness of the community, however devoted and self-forgetful he may be. But we will look just now only at the quality of the proposed end taken alone. (2) He may represent himself as witnessing this state of happiness as contributed to by him negatively and positively, and himself as included in it—as wealthy, famous, beloved. This is a mixed end, partly altruistic and partly egoistic, and might be styled *Ego-altruistic*. In attempting to realise it doubtless a conflict would sooner or

later occur, in which either altruism or egoism would have to be chosen to the detriment of the other. Perhaps a compromise would be effected by which the altruism and egoism would modify each other, giving a lower degree of both. This sort of compromise is very common, and this kind of ideal end is perhaps that cherished by the majority of civilised and enlightened human beings, the egoism and altruism varying with respect to each other according to character and circumstances. (3) He may turn his attention inward and represent himself as in the possession of wealth, power, or fame—a Croesus, a Napoleon, a Washington, a Shakspeare; but with his contemporaries or posterity benefited and made happier by his efforts; the first, however, being primary, the last secondary. Such an ideal end—to continue our use of Spencerian terms—is characteristically *Altru-egoistic*. (4) The individual may represent himself not as doing, but as *being* something, *καλοκἀγαθός*, as having developed to the highest degree of symmetry his whole nature, as having realised the highest conception of excellence and virtue, as being worthy, or, in other words, as having attained perfection of character. This amiable sort of selfishness may be styled *Æstho-egoistic*. (5) Finally, a person may imagine himself as attaining wealth, power, glory, or as enjoying any one of these, but utterly without regard to the condition of others—whether they be neglected, or whether the end be achieved at their expense, or through their grief. This is the purely *Egoistic* ideal.

Of these ideal ends, one is altruistic, two are mixed, and two are egoistic. The *æstho-egoistic* exhibits a very subtle form of egoism, to which we shall need to give our attention fartheron. It is not dangerous to the social order (except indirectly), because it adopts the fulfilment of the moral law as the means for attaining the perfection to which it aims. It does not, however, and cannot produce either the most useful or the highest type of character socially considered, since it is after all essentially egoistic. The moral law, based upon the needs of the social organism, demands altruism, not blind, but intelligent, governed by the social idea of the chief good, and will accept nothing else as a substitute, because in no other way can loyalty and obedience to its behests be secured.

In proposing to himself these ideal ends to be practically realised, if possible, and as furnishing the rules of conduct, the individual contemplates them with pleasurable emotion. They are



pleasures, groups of pleasures, or series of pleasures. In the construction and maintenance of these fictions (intellectually speaking) he feels pleasure, and in the absence of the imagined condition he feels pain. Thus he has a volitional stimulus to realise a desire for what he has pictured to himself as enjoyable. This latter, however, may be restrained by the thought of the impossibility of attainment, its great difficulty, or the pains which may ensue from attempting it. Whether then he will persist, or will replace his selected end by another, depends altogether upon his mental constitution and his circumstances. The result will be governed wholly by the strength of the motives which arise in his mind, whether they be suggested from within, or impressed from without. Whatever end he finally chooses will in any event be an imagined pleasure, not in possession, but the attainment of which will relieve or offset present uneasiness and discontent—that is, present pain of one sort or another, presentative or more or less representative.

It is very generally admitted that the ends of the highest happiness of the greatest number, and of the individual are not at all coincident. He who aims at a social and altruistic end may secure it only with a detriment to his own happiness. This is undoubtedly true to the observation of other parties who are lookers on. How far it is true subjectively to the individual primarily concerned is not so easily decided. When contemplating an end of attainment, he may recognise it as an altruistic end, and at the same time be perfectly well aware that if he aims to secure it or promote it by his action, much suffering will result to him, more than if he adopted and followed some egoistic end. But mere cognitions do not determine volition or action; the latter are governed by the quantity of feeling accompanying the cognition and by organised habits, these habits often adding to, or subtracting from, the quantity of feeling. If it were not for the capacity to form dispositions by habitual action, it would be impossible to follow representative ends at all remote, or to establish any fixed character. And it is in consequence of this ability to form and maintain dispositions, and of their actual formation, that men, on the one hand, see the right and approve it, and yet the wrong pursue; and also, on the other hand, behold the wrong, and are drawn toward it by egoistic considerations, but yet the *right* pursue. A person may be so educated that habitually he derives more pleasure from promoting the happiness of other people than from acting directly with self-regard. His forecasts

and anticipations of future pleasure are all in connection with self-abnegation of some sort. This may be the case with respect to all his enjoyments, or it may be generally true with the reservation of a pet vice or two. Then, if something presents itself as within his reach and of egoistic advantage, but, if pursued, likely to bring unhappiness to someone else, the force of habitual desires to please others is aroused in opposition. Yielding in thought to the egoism produces present pain, while suppressing the egoism and yielding to the altruistic pressure of motive brings a feeling of pleasurable relief. If, then, the pain aroused by thought of following the egoistic course, and the pleasure experienced in contemplation of the altruistic outweigh in quantity the pain and the pleasure of the contrary choice, the egoistic volitions will be checked and the altruistic prevail, and *vice versa*. This altruistic choice may consist perfectly with the intellectual conviction that more pleasure, *as other people view pleasure*, would result from the egoistic choice; and for the moment the man's attention is given to the pleasures abandoned, and he feels the pain of regret for having given them up; but this very transition of thought produces the representative pain of the presence of these egoistic advantages and the absence of the feelings which accompany the knowledge of altruistic acts performed and of their performance; the lack is felt, the mind reverts to the altruistic alternative with a rush of pleasurable feeling moving volition. Then comes the intellectual conviction that after all the acquisition and possession of those things which do give pleasure ordinarily under the circumstances would not give pleasure to him; he would not enjoy them, and so he rests upon his choice, more or less content according to the strength of feeling aroused on one side or the other. Moreover, the inability of the mind to dwell upon pain in thought, and to represent it with great vividness, or perhaps, in better phrase, the natural tendency to put pain out of mind, prevents ordinarily as much attention being given to the ills ensuing from a course of action leading to a particular end, if the ultimate result is represented as agreeable. In view of all these facts it certainly cannot be said that the individual in making his choice is moved by anything else but pleasure and pain. Nor is it easy to see how his preference is otherwise to be accounted for. He is seeking his happiness as it appears to him, though knowing that on ordinary reckonings of pleasure and pain he is wrong. Still, the fact remains that *for him* happiness lies in the path selected.

The process is exactly the same, but with an evil result, if the pet vice be introduced as a powerful motive element. Let us suppose a person generally altruistic but fond of his cups. He has plans of a life of useful activity to promote the welfare of his wife and children, perhaps of others; but with him great pleasure is attached to his chosen self-indulgence. He sees that his energies are diminished, his money spent, his wife and children thereby made miserable in consequence of his evil habit; but spite of all this he cannot get happiness without his drink. He can represent the condition of himself as existing freed from his habit as a better condition, and as one in which he would be happier *if he could only so change himself as to enjoy such a condition*. In such a representation he feels pain at his present situation; but this feeling of pain does not compare in intensity with the feeling of pain which actually arises when he is deprived of his dram. He yields to the greater feeling; for him the greater happiness is in the cup. And by representations of his self-regarding pleasure his conduct is continually modified with a view to repetitions of it. He can see that people who are not intemperate are, by comparison with other people who are drunkards, apparently happier, secure a greater amount of pleasure, and are afflicted with less pain. He can also imagine himself as happier in such a condition; but when he proposes to conform his conduct to such an ideal, he is made aware that he is or has become so constituted that for him no happiness can subsist except with his indulgence. He has constructed in imagination another man such as he is not, for whom happiness can be maintained without drink. Perhaps I may think it would be better for me if I were an angel, and in being an angel I might have more self-satisfaction. I can imagine an angel as happier than I; but if I follow the things that pertain to humanity in preference to those I conceive are more peculiar to angelic beings, it is because, being a man, my happiness can only be secured by objects within the compass of humanity. I am what I am; and if I cannot make myself different, I shall seek what I can attain, and in that find the greater happiness, although knowing that if I were somebody or something else I might in and by other ways be better or happier.

From what has preceded, it will thus be seen that the social needs produce social ends, which determine the moral law. That this law proposes as the chief social good, and thus as the social end to be attained, the maximum happiness of the greatest num-

ber. That the chief social good is not coincident necessarily with the maximum happiness of the individual, who may be able only to find his good in his own selfish ends; but that, on the other hand, the latter may be so educated, under certain conditions, as to derive his highest happiness from the happiness of others, and to find his chief good in life in contributing to the realisation of the social *summum bonum*. Obviously there is room for much doubt and question oftentimes as to what actually does tend toward the promotion of the common good, and what is opposed to it; also as to what methods are best calculated to produce in individuals the altruistic disposition and repress the egoistic. Ethics is thus a theoretical science and a practical as well; while closely connected with it is the science and art of Education.

## CHAPTER IX.

*SOME QUESTIONS OF MORAL SCIENCE.*

THE doctrines of this work thus far unfolded, with some modifications according to varying ideas of different thinkers, but nevertheless without essential controversion, have been generally accepted as furnishing the scientific explanation of the nature of evil, as supplying the groundwork of the moral law, and as pointing out the direction in which effort should be put forth to secure its fulfilment. They furnish the theory and precepts of what we called in Chapter III. a natural as opposed to an artificial or theological morality. An influence, however, has arisen in recent English thought adverse to what is usually termed the Utilitarian or Hedonistic Ethics, which, though it certainly has theological postulates to rest upon, can scarcely be called a theological system. The advocates of this system of ethics purport to establish its theses upon a scientific examination of the facts of human consciousness without any aid from assumed divine commands, its implied theology being pantheistic. This antagonistic influence proceeds from an ethical system of *Æstho-egoism* which is most fully developed in the 'Prolegomena to Ethics' of the late Professor Thomas Hill Green. Although the ethical tenets of this system are much involved with the general philosophy of knowledge upon which they are founded, which fact would prevent a very thorough examination of the whole treatise, yet in view of what has been stated above, I can scarcely pass by the propositions of this able writer without some remark, especially since I have already been taken to task by critics for omitting reference to them in a former work, wherein I have indulged in a little ethical discussion.<sup>1</sup> If, then, the reader is not fond of criticism and ethical polemic, I advise him to omit this chapter, since he will find in it no new principles, and, probably also no new applications of principles already advanced, except incidentally in connection with the discussion of the ethical end and the general rule of the moral law. Nevertheless the student

<sup>1</sup> *System of Psychology*, chap. lxi.

of ethics cannot fail to be interested in the new development of thought mentioned, and will demand at least some consideration of it.

The concluding words of Green's work, in treating of the practical value of moral theories, declare that the author's point has been to show that a criterion for the determination of conduct to those who need some 'counsel of perfection' above the declarations of conventional morality<sup>1</sup> 'is afforded by the theory of ultimate good as a perfection of the human spirit resting on the will to be perfect (which may be called, in short, the theory of virtue as an end in itself) but not by the theory of good as consisting in a maximum of possible pleasure.' Again, in another place, the author says<sup>2</sup>: 'Our theory has been that the development of morality is founded on the action in man of an idea of true or absolute good consisting in the full realisation of the capabilities of the human soul.' Moral good is 'an abiding satisfaction of an abiding self.'<sup>3</sup> 'Projecting himself into the future as a permanent subject of possible well-being or ill-being—and he must so project himself in seeking for a permanent good. . . '<sup>4</sup> The idea of a true good as for one's self is 'ultimately, or in principle, an idea of satisfaction for a self that abides and contemplates itself as abiding.' 'This well-being he doubtless conceives as his own.'<sup>5</sup> The intrinsic good is 'the perfection of the human soul.'<sup>6</sup> 'The true good for man is the realisation of his capabilities, or the perfection of human life.'<sup>7</sup> 'The good will is a will which has such perfection for its object.'<sup>7</sup> The good will is 'the one unconditional good . . . the end by which we estimate the effects of an action.'<sup>8</sup>

From the foregoing quotations it will appear that in last resort the ethical end of the individual's effort is egoistic. He is to seek the good, and this good is his own perfection. This is the ideal he is ever to hold before him. The will to be perfect is the unconditional good, and in attaining the good, and in labouring for it, lies the only self-satisfaction. The moral law, then, according to Green, lays upon each person an imperative to seek his own perfection, to be virtuous for virtue's sake as an end in itself. It is possible that some of the adherents of Green's ideas would demur to having the system termed egoistic; but how upon any fair con-

<sup>1</sup> Book IV. chap. i. p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> Book III. chap. v. p. 286. The references in the footnotes of this chapter will be understood as referring to Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics*, unless otherwise stated.

<sup>3</sup> Book III. chap. iv. p. 234.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 231.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 232.

<sup>6</sup> Book IV. chap. i. p. 303.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 308.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 292.

struction of language it can be made to appear otherwise I am at a loss to understand. Whenever we press the inquiry: 'Why ought I to do thus and not otherwise?' we invariably receive the answer, 'For the sake of your own self-satisfaction, which can be attained in no other way.' We are always thrown back upon the perfection of self as an ultimate end.

When we come to consider how the individual is to realise the ideal of his own perfection, we are informed that it is in a social good which is not in conflict, but is identical with his own personal good. 'Society is founded on the recognition by persons of each other, and their interest in each other *as persons*, i.e., as beings who are ends to themselves, who are consciously determined to action by the conception of themselves as that for the sake of which they act. They are interested in each other *as persons*, in so far as each, being aware that another presents his own self-satisfaction to himself as an object, finds satisfaction for himself in procuring or witnessing the self-satisfaction of the other. Society is founded on such mutual interest.—' <sup>1</sup> 'But the converse is equally true, that only through society, in the sense explained, is personality actualised. Only through society is anyone enabled to give that effect to the idea of himself as the object of his actions, to the idea of a possible better state of himself, without which the idea would remain like that of space to a man who had not the senses either of sight or touch. . . . And just as it is through the action of society that the individual comes at once practically to conceive his personality—his nature as an object to himself—and to conceive the same personality as belonging to others, so it is society that supplies all the higher content to this conception, all those objects of a man's personal interest in living for which he lives for his own satisfaction, except such as are derived from the merely animal nature.' <sup>2</sup> Once more, in order to be good in the truly moral sense, the individual must observe that 'the contribution to human perfection in some way or other must be the object in which he seeks self-satisfaction, the object for which he is living for himself.' <sup>3</sup>

Accordingly we are presented with an ideal of a society conditioned by a moral law imposing upon each individual a striving for his own perfection, which, however, is only to be attained through seeking for the common good, which is the perfection and thus the self-satisfaction of all. This is still egoism.

<sup>1</sup> Book III. chap. ii. p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 190.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 191.

For though the individual secures his own excellence by recognising and favouring the common excellence, yet he can only do this by presenting himself to himself as gaining his self-satisfaction in such a course. This last is the end proposed toward which the other is the recognised means.

Now, to some considerable degree, this doctrine of ideal ends as determining good and evil resembles universalistic hedonism as it has been set forth in these pages. With a little construing and amending we should have no difficulty in reading out of it a sound, respectable utilitarianism. Certainly, so far as the practical side is concerned this would be quite simple; but were we to make even the suggestion of any possible affinities between the two, we should be greeted with a terrible outcry from the *Æstho-egoists* who follow Professor Green. They are not only no friends of hedonism, but their system is absolutely opposed to hedonism, different in principle, in proof, and in precept. If, then, they insist on refusing the amendments and constructions necessary for the object suggested, we must claim that it is greatly the worse for their doctrine; since as it stands, as they appear to mean it, rejecting construction and amendment, the expression of the moral law is greatly inferior, both from a theoretical and practical point of view, to the ethics of hedonism.

Reading over the last three quotations from Green, we are impressed with this similarity to some of the utilitarian tenets to which I have referred. The average intelligent lay reader would think an assertion that an individual finds his self-satisfaction only in witnessing the self-satisfaction of the others in his social organism to be nearly the same thing as saying that the individual finds his highest happiness in the highest happiness of those about him. And if working for this highest happiness of others or their self-satisfaction constitutes perfection, this is pretty much what the universalistic hedonist finds as his great precept of the moral law. The *Æstho-egoist*, however, has the most profound contempt for 'happiness' or 'pleasure' as explaining or as furnishing ends for moral action, and abhors the use of these terms for such purposes. If, then, we venture to ask him if he means that this ideal condition of social through individual perfection is a condition of the maximum of pleasure and the minimum of pain, he flies in our face, tries to blind our vision by flapping his wings, while he seeks revenge by scratching us with his claws.

Indeed, Green, when in the midst of his exposition he comes



to points where the reader would be likely to ask just such questions as the foregoing, breaks out into attacks upon hedonism, as if to impress upon the world that a maximum of pleasure is *not* the chief good, either individual or social, were a matter of no less importance than to convince that perfection is the true ethical end. Hence Green's work has a negative as well as a positive value, so far as it has value at all. The attempted destructive criticism of hedonism seems to me to be far the ablest part of the 'Prolegomena,' for the suggestions there made are often subtle, ingenious, and plausible, while the positive constructive portions seem laboured, clothed with an unhealthy phraseology, unsymmetrical, and at times meaningless, except as interpreted by the despised hedonistic philosophy. So much is this the case that I quite agree with Professor Henry Sidgwick<sup>1</sup> in thinking that Green has failed to furnish either a *rationale* of duties, 'or even to provide his readers with an outline of a coherent method by which a system of duties could be philosophically worked out.'

This appears very plainly when we try to find out what Green means by 'perfection.' In what does it consist? What are the outward and visible signs? What is the perfect social condition? How are we to know that one state is more perfect than another? The way in which these questions are answered is very unique. The author tells us that a moral agent is one who is under a self-direction to seek the true good, and that the true good is 'that which satisfies the desire of a moral agent, or that in which a moral agent can find the satisfaction of himself which he necessarily seeks!'<sup>2</sup> Anticipating the objection that will at once occur, Green proceeds to observe that in a sense such objection is valid, but since man has not secured the full realisation of perfection he cannot know what it is. 'We know it only according to the measure of what we have so far done or are doing for its attainment.'<sup>3</sup> 'Of a life of completed development, of activity with the end attained, we can only speak or think in negatives, and thus only can we speak or think of that state of being in which, according to our theory, the ultimate moral good must consist. Yet the conviction that there must be such a state of being, merely negative as is our theoretical apprehension of it, may have supreme influence over conduct, in moving us to that effort after the Better which, at least as a conscious effort, implies the con-

<sup>1</sup> *Mind*, No. XXXIV.

<sup>2</sup> Book III. chap. i. 171.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* chap. ii. 195.

viction of there being a Best.'<sup>1</sup> 'It is, therefore, not an illogical procedure, because it is the only procedure suited to the matter in hand, to say that the goodness of man lies in devotion to the ideal of humanity, and then that the ideal of humanity consists in the goodness of man. It means that such an ideal, not yet realised but operating as a motive already, constitutes in man an inchoate form of that life, that perfect development of himself, of which the completion would be the realised ideal itself.'<sup>2</sup> It will thus be observed that Green persists in his doctrines in the face of the admitted fact that they involve a *circulus in probando*.

Our first emotion on reading the above-quoted words and their context is one of amusement. Then, on re-reading and reflecting that Green discerned clearly what we are prone to think his own folly, and yet deliberately insists upon it after stating the manifest objection as clearly as any critic could possibly do, we begin to doubt our faculties, and become suspicious that Green has apprehended and is enunciating a profound truth, which our own obtuseness prevents us from discerning. Some further consideration is, therefore, very necessary.

That the human mind has a constructive activity admits of no question. This never has been disputed by anyone in any manner worthy of serious consideration. By virtue of this ability man forms imaginative pictures of experiences which do not otherwise actually occur to him, using for this purpose, indeed, materials which experience has furnished. He employs the representative powers, which project into the future in new forms the presentations of the past. Thus ideals of a better state or condition are among these products of the constructive activities. Why we form such ideals and seek to realise them is a question which Green answers by supposing an eternal spiritual principle, which gradually reproduces itself in the human soul and prompts to improvement. I do not regard it necessary to consider what foundation there is for such a supposition in this place; but I am quite willing to concede the fact that ideals of Better, if not Best, are formed and do stimulate conduct. Allowing this, what we want to know is how to determine what is Better or Best. This is what we mean when we inquire what is Moral Good. We can obtain no practical rule of conduct till we answer this. No positive system of ethical precepts can be formulated without it. An individual may, indeed, have a great desire to be good or better,

<sup>1</sup> Book III. chap. i. 172.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. chap. ii. 196.

and may have a definite notion of what is good and better. Does his will to be good and his attempt to realise his own conception of the good make him good? Perhaps so; but then how comes in the idea of common good? Either there must be some outward standard by which the individual gauges his conduct, and which is binding on all individuals, or moral good means unadulterated egoism. In this last view we could have no common moral law whatever, but in place of it a multitude of individual ideals of good which each one is striving to realise, and which only by some happy coincidence agree. How out of such a condition can we obtain any moral or social order whatever?

Here, it seems to me, Green's system utterly breaks down. One would suppose that he must abandon entirely all attempt to connect moral action with social imperatives, resting entirely on his explanation of the truly moral good as consisting unconditionally in the will to be good, leaving the Eternal Cause to work out the results. To do so would at least be consistent with his declarations; and it appears to be the only consistent position for him to take. Instead of this, however, he lays upon the individual as an obligation of moral duty the ordinary practical scheme of morality, which he says legitimately follows from his theory of good. The imperative to seek perfection, to have the good will, Green declares, though it 'can enjoin nothing, *without liability to exception*,<sup>1</sup> but disinterested obedience to itself will have no lack of definite content. The particular duties which it enjoins will, at least, be all those in the practice of which, according to the hitherto experience of men, some progress is made towards the fulfilment of man's capabilities, or some condition necessary to that progress, is satisfied.'<sup>2</sup> These rules, the author goes on to say, are unconditionally binding, except as against a desire for the best in conduct, and are binding absolutely as against any conduct having as an end the individual's pleasure. It is in this way that Green attempts to connect the ordinary rules of practical duty with his moral end. I understand him to mean that the ideal of perfection enjoins that conduct which past experience has shown to be most conducive to the advancement of the race, unless a strong subjective conviction or feeling exists that something else will alone satisfy the will to be good, in which latter case this conviction is to be followed and not the dictate of convention based upon general experience. In other words, the ideal of self-

<sup>1</sup> Italics his.

<sup>2</sup> Book III. chap. ii. 197.

perfection is first and last; and if the individual thinks that the common rules of morality are most conducive to his own perfection, he should follow them; if, on the other hand, his ideal of self-perfection requires him to make an exception, it is his duty to make it, though he must be very sure that in such a case he is not really animated by a desire for his own pleasure, which never justifies such an exception.

Now, we should naturally fancy that the professed follower of this ethical philosophy must either declare that the moral end is the perfection of the individual Ego, which is to be the dominant end whenever any other comes into competition with it, or that the moral end is the common perfection to which the individual end is to be subordinated, if need be. Green seeks to evade the dilemma by the assertion that in fact these two ends coincide. By this it will be supposed he means that the perfection of the Ego is to be realised only in seeking for the perfection of others. Though theoretically each one must seek his own perfection, practically he can only find it in seeking the perfection of humanity. This certainly sounds very like the 'Fundamental Paradox of Hedonism.'

Again we are impelled to ask, What is this individual and common perfection? We are told that it is subjective, but only to be achieved through effort upon some outward object. It is a satisfaction to be gained in labouring for a certain state or condition of other people. It is not pleasure, happiness, or joy. Perish the thought! It is satisfaction, self-approbation resting in the will to be good, and knowing that it can command such self-satisfaction only in this way. Still perplexed, once more we ask, What is this perfection? We get no answer further, except that at least we must in the main follow the teachings of experience as to what courses and conditions have contributed most to the fulfilment of man's capabilities, and improve upon past experience, if we can. Thus, confessedly, the moral ideal does not furnish us with any definite schedule of duties, or indeed tell us in what directions our efforts to realise it are to proceed. For these latter we must go to past experience. The moral ideal does not even explain itself, but past experience must be appealed to for an explanation of its meaning.

If perfection be essentially the will to be good, the individual must have some idea in his mind of what goodness consists in. It must be some volition affecting character, according to Green.

And character involves habitual disposition, issuing in actions or conduct. This conduct bears relation to other beings. It is the will to do something which shall aid the perfection of others. When this will exists, the ego is conscious of it and *feels* satisfaction; when it does not exist, dissatisfaction exists which the Ego also *feels*. Judging others by himself, he will infer that when the good will exists in others they also will *feel* satisfaction; and in the measure that it is not realised they will *feel* dissatisfaction. If, then, I know that I am promoting by my conduct this feeling of self-satisfaction in others, I shall feel my own self-satisfaction. Hence I shall be realising my own perfection if I do those things which promote the feeling of self-satisfaction in others. But I have no means of determining when others have this feeling except as they exhibit self-satisfaction. But they may exhibit self-satisfaction with noxious conduct. I am under no moral obligation to encourage this, but quite the contrary. I must, then, do those things which common experience has shown to be conducive to promoting a will to aid the perfection of others. How, then, according to common experience, are people esteemed to be better or worse? They are considered to be made better if they are taught to obey the laws, to exercise temperance, forbearance, and benevolence; to do no murder, to steal not, to avoid covetousness—in a word, to do as they would be done by and to love their neighbours as themselves. When I sincerely will to promote those virtues in others and practise them myself I am evincing my own will to be good. Our will to be good, which is the unconditional good, subsists in the disposition to practise and promote the cardinal virtues, which are sometimes said to be epitomised in the Eleventh Commandment of Scripture. This seems to be the outcome of Green's ethics. In proceeding to sum up I trust I shall do the author no injustice. I certainly believe that my formulation is supported both by the quotations I have made and their context.

1. The self-satisfaction coming from the possession of individual virtue is the chief good.
2. Virtue consists in a governing disposition to be virtuous.
3. Being virtuous consists (for the individual) in putting forth activity (by example and by precept) for making humanity in general virtuous.
4. Humanity is virtuous when all men are permanently disposed to be virtuous.

If Professor Green had stopped here I do not believe he would have himself contended that the foregoing conclusions could be very fruitful in results of any kind. I doubt if they are even profitable as exhibiting feats of mental gymnastics. But this seems to be his philosophy as to the *Summum Bonum*. Now as to the rules of Right Conduct:—

5. Experience has shown that humanity has been improved (i.e. men have been made more virtuous, and better realised their self-satisfaction in virtue) by men not committing murder. Hence in order to have a will to be virtuous I must have a will to commit no murder (except a situation arise in which I may feel that my ideal of self-perfection requires me to commit murder, when it is my duty to make an exception, provided I am convinced that I am not constrained to murder from the pleasure of doing so). In like manner, experience having pronounced in favour of benevolence, I must have a disposition to be benevolent, subject to similar qualifications. So with all the practical virtues.

6. Rules of conduct are hence determined by the experience of the race as to what is better for humanity and what is worse. Men who are virtuous must at least (subject to occasional exception) conform to these rules, else they are not virtuous. They are still virtuous, however, if they veto these rules from a high sense of duty without any taint of pleasure.

It thus appears—

(A) The Chief Good is subjective feeling or consciousness of self-satisfaction. This is attained and kept by right volition issuing in right conduct.

(B) What is Right is determined by the experience of humanity as to what is better and worse for humanity, subject to occasional correction (to be cautiously exercised) by individual ideals of the Better.

*Appropos* of this enunciation of the principle of right conduct (B), it may be said that the experience of humanity must mean the experience of what is better or worse for individuals more or less. And *better* and *worse* have no meaning except with reference to the standard of Good. That which is nearer the Chief Good is, then, better; that which is more remote is worse. Hence we must say that Right is determined by the experience of humanity as to what is the Chief Good of humanity. But the Chief Good is a form of consciousness subjective to the individual. Thus right conduct is that which the experience of humanity has proved to be

conducive to the securing and maintenance in the individual of this consciousness. The experience of humanity has shown that such conduct is altruistic regard for other people. Consequently altruism becomes a law of conduct.

Really, then, in order to get any meaning out of Green's doctrines of the Chief Good and the rule of Right, we must resort to the experience of humanity as to what has been best for humanity. But experience of humanity being nothing else than the experience of individuals, we must consider also in what the latter consists. It certainly consists in consciousness, and consciousness has its three phases—feeling, cognition, and volition. There is a consciousness which we seek to eliminate, and a consciousness we seek to retain; the latter we may call *desired*, the former *undesired*. The desires of individuals come into conflict. Since the fulfilment of individual desires is the basis of the consideration of experiences as desirable—it being necessary that we pass to the ideal of *desirable* from the *desired*—the only limitation which humanity can put upon the fulfilment of individual desires is the ill effect it may have upon the desires of somebody else. This seems to be an inevitable conclusion.

We are now, I hope, in a better position to see the bearings of Green's ethical philosophy. We must be confirmed, I think, in our belief that his circular statements of ethical principle mean nothing at all, if taken by themselves. When supplemented they lead either to an indefinite incoherent egoism, wherein the individual acts upon the promptings of his own inclinations, guided only by a vague ideal, which is wholly at the mercy of his selfish instincts, except as some sort of common morality is beaten into him by his environment; or else the ideal principles are subordinated to rules of practical morality derived from experience of the race, which upon examination are found to involve and postulate all the utilitarian considerations. This last is Green's actual procedure. That which experience has taught the world yields the greatest amount of self-satisfaction to the greatest number of individuals is good. The Chief Good is the highest degree of good which we can realise—indefinite indeed as to limits and particular characteristics further than the general one of self-satisfaction. But, whatever it is, experiences of the past must determine our appreciation of it. Hence the Chief Good is a generalisation from experiences of human life, and our rule of conduct is determined by those experiences, which Green calls self-satisfaction and the

hedonists pleasure. This seems to be 'tweedle-dum' and 'tweedle-dee.' In fact, were it not for the frequent and express opposition to all forms of utilitarianism and hedonism displayed throughout the 'Prolegomena,' the reader would be much disposed to think that Green, though befogged by the mists of some so-called transcendental philosophy, was feeling his way along the right path toward a universalistic hedonism, and had in his mind a nebulous conception of it which he was trying to express. But we are prevented from entertaining such a supposition for the reason stated. We must, therefore, ascertain, if we can, wherein Green finds hedonism so objectionable theoretically and practically. And it will be especially convenient to begin this task just here, because we have come upon a point at which lies, according to our author, a fundamental fallacy of hedonistic ethic.

This error consists in the non-recognition of what is claimed to be the fact, that pleasure is not the only object of desire. This is charged upon hedonists as generally and characteristically their mistake, Mr. Henry Sidgwick, however, being exonerated, though at the expense of logical consistency. According to the hedonists we desire nothing but pleasure, and what we do desire we desire because it is pleasurable; according to Green we desire other things than pleasure, and if in such case pleasure is attached to the desire, it is *because* we desire. In other words, pleasure (or exemption from pain) is not the only end or motive of volition and action. Green considers desire to have the common characteristic that it has a direction 'to an object consciously presented as not yet real, and of which the realisation would satisfy, i.e. extinguish, the desire. Towards this extinction of itself in the realisation of its object every desire is in itself an effort; however the effort may be prevented from making its outward sign by the interference of other desires or by the circumstances of the case. Such desire, then, implies on the part of the desiring subject: (a) a distinction of itself at once from its desire and from the real world; (b) a consciousness that the conditions of the real world are at present not in harmony with it, the subject of the desire; (c) an effort, however undeveloped or misdirected, so to adjust the conditions of the real world as to produce satisfaction of the desire.'<sup>1</sup> Moral, or, as Green puts it, 'distinctively human,' action proceeds from Motives; and motives are ideas 'of an end which a self-conscious subject presents to itself' and strives to realise for its own self-

<sup>1</sup> Book II. chap. ii. 131, 132.



satisfaction.'<sup>1</sup> Desire, then, seems to be the parent of motive. A felt want accompanied by an idea of a possible state or condition in which this want is satisfied or extinguished constitutes the motive to action.<sup>2</sup> The idea of one's self enjoying pleasure in any manner thus may be a motive; but this is not the only species of motive. If now desire is the parent of motive, what is the parent of desire? Why do we desire a particular thing, or, in fact, desire at all? Because, as nearly as I can make out, the eternal consciousness reproducing itself in the mind of man awakens these desires, and continually stimulates new desires toward a more complete self-development or a higher perfection.<sup>3</sup> Whether or not the eternal consciousness stimulates the desires for pleasure or the lower desires does not appear, I believe. The inference, however, is that it does; but speedily improves upon them by inspiring other and better desires. And, as before set forth, morality consists in the will to seek and promote the self-perfection which the eternal consciousness is all the while suggesting.

Green has not favoured us with any complete, positive, and systematic analysis of feeling, nor has he exhibited at all fully his ideas of the mutual relations of feeling, cognition, and volition, although he has done much in the work now before us and in other places in the way of negative criticism of the doctrines of others, and though he does maintain clearly enough that in all the functions of mind there is the one self or Ego uniting the whole. Indeed we are very frequently impressed with the author's apparent lack of attention to psychology. It does not *seem* as if he had ever devoted himself to a patient and careful study of the *facts* of mental experience and action. Probably he preferred to work out his theory of knowledge, not indeed without some reference to the facts of mental action, but deductively from postulates or *a priori* principles rather than inductively from observations upon the more special and particular operations of mind, and upon the structure and functions of its correlated nerve organisation. Other people have followed this method before him, and brought great reproach upon the whole guild of students of mind. And it must be confessed that they have not added much to positive knowledge by their labours. Hegel was a philosopher who worked in this way. It cannot be said that hitherto the Hegelian method has been very fruitful in valuable results to humanity, intellectually or morally. At any rate, however much Hegel may have been studied, when

<sup>1</sup> Book II. chap. i 87.<sup>2</sup> Book III. chap. i 175.<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 174.

his disciples come to write books they are quite careful to keep all mention of their master out of the volumes. But I, for one, sincerely hope that it will not be counted among the benefits to be conferred by an increase of Kantian influence in England that the pursuit of the theory of knowledge shall ever be attempted without the fullest and soundest basis being laid in psychology. The value of any movement which aims to construct such a theory, except upon this foundation, should be profoundly distrusted. Its tendency is to undo all the good work which has brought the knowledge of mind within the circle of the sciences, and caused the study of mind to be respected and valued.

I can but think that if Green had been distinctively a psychological student we should have had a much more satisfactory account of the mutual relations of intellect, feeling, and will. But it must be confessed that the hedonists have not always been clear, either in their thoughts or expressions, upon these subjects. And it is this want of lucidity that sometimes gives Green an advantage in his attacks upon hedonism. The difficulty with the hedonists has been that they have not seemed to recognise, except intermittently, the relations of pain to volition. They have not made prominent the office of pain as a motive. Green is perfectly right in saying, 'The appetite of hunger must precede and condition the pleasure which consists in its satisfaction. It cannot, therefore, have that pleasure for its exciting object.'<sup>1</sup> The eating of food may be presented as an end, but it is for the relief of hunger. The exciting cause of volition and action then is some felt pain or discomfort. 'The will moves to the greatest uneasiness.' The *motive* is pain, or, if we prefer to say so, a want. Why uneasiness is produced is a deeper question, which we shall consider later; but it is enough to say now that pain, presentative or representative, is the primary stimulus to action. So far we can allow the justice of Green's criticism, though I think he would have found the real ground of his objection rather in the lack of emphasis and prominence given to the true facts of the case by the thinkers criticised than in their misapprehension or want of apprehension of those facts. But, granting that uneasiness is the motive, in order to obtain relief from that discomfort action must take place. Past experience connects a pain with actions which have relieved it. Memory of those actions, and of the state of relief in which they terminated, creates what we term an *end* of action or

<sup>1</sup> Book III. chap. i. 161.

volition; that is, a state of such relief accompanied by the circumstances under which it subsists, as, for instance, in the case just referred to, a loaded table, and myself eating, and free to eat. The end involves a cognition of an intellectual object having relation to myself—the table of food, and I eating, and a feeling, we will say, of satisfaction in such eating. We then say we desire to get and eat the food, and volition goes forth to fulfil the desire. When we get and eat the food our desire is satisfied, the pain is gone, a feeling of pleasure takes its place. Now the question arises, Is it the feeling of pleasure that we desire, or is it the getting and eating the food?

It may be safely said, to begin with, that we do not desire anything which we do not in some manner cognise. That is, if we desire we know that we desire, and if we desire a particular thing we cognise that thing as desired. It may also be said that we do not cognise a thing as desired unless its presence in mind produces at least an incipient feeling of relief from present uneasiness. Uneasiness is pain; relief from uneasiness is therefore pleasure. The thing desired is hence an intellectual object which is accompanied with pleasurable feeling. Probably Green would not have quarrelled seriously with this statement. But it seems clear from these considerations that while the *object* of desire is a cognition, the *end* of desire is a pleasurable feeling. While, then, it is true that what we desire is an object presented to ourselves as attained, we desire this object because it creates pleasurable feeling in place of the pain involved in the desire. Green's own explanations above quoted seem to confirm this idea. But we shall also notice, if this be so, the entire erroneousness of Green's assertion that we derive our pleasure from anything whatever because we desire it. The cognition with its accompanying pleasure exists before we can be said at all to desire the thing which is the object of desire. For desire is certainly not the painful feeling of uneasiness, although that gives rise to the desire. We may be very much disturbed by hunger, but if we did not know that food appeased hunger we should never have what could be called a desire for food. The representation of food with the representative pleasure creates a volitional action toward increasing that representative pleasure till it becomes presentative; so long as this is hindered desire subsists, but till the representative pleasure comes into experience there is no such thing as desire for the object with which it is connected. If, then, we admit that desire postulates a present dissatisfaction,

which we think of as relieved by the attainment of a given object, which latter would not be desired unless it furnished a satisfaction to replace the present dissatisfaction, we are forced to conclude that the object of desire is always an object to which is attached pleasurable feeling, which alone makes it the object of desire. We can only avoid this by some new analysis of feeling with respect to quality, and with respect to its relations to volition. Psychology makes the fundamental distinction between pleasurable and painful feelings, there being also feelings of relative indifference between the two. If, in addition to the quality of feeling as pleasurable and painful, there is another quality of self-satisfaction and self-dissatisfaction, or if states of consciousness have, besides the aspects of cognition, feeling, and volition, the other aspects of self-satisfaction and self-dissatisfaction, then it may be true that we do not always desire pleasurable objects because pleasurable, and that desire is not so far forth as it is desire necessarily directed toward something pleasurable. Again, if we deny that every state of consciousness involves the three complementary aspects of feeling, cognition, and volition, and that we have no other mode of defining or describing a pleasurable experience except in terms of volition as an experience we seek to retain, while a painful experience is one we seek to get rid of and prevent, there may be some room for assertions like those of Green. But to admit the truth of these latter on the topic of desire we should be forced to overturn the whole science of psychology, and build it anew. I certainly am not prepared to do this upon the unsupported dicta of a writer who does not profess to approach his subject as an unprejudiced inquirer, but starts out with the proposition that a philosophy of knowledge and of ethics, which is not a natural science, is a desideratum, and then attempts to construct one as plausible as he can make it!

In this consideration of the objects of desire, however, Green has the benefit (of which he fully avails himself) of another uncertain and ambiguous declaration of the hedonists, namely, that men always seek *pleasure*. But when the uncertainty is cleared up, it does not help Green's position. At first blush it might seem that to say we always seek (i.e. volition is always directed as to an end toward) pleasurable objects, or objects which raise pleasurable feeling, and have no power to seek anything else, and to declare that we always seek, and must seek, pleasure, is the same thing. But it is not the same thing. The first statement is true; the

second is false. Green would almost, perhaps quite, accept the first, but because he does not understand the true meaning of the second expression, and is afraid of its supposed implications, from this fear supervenes a theory which is not at all true. The hedonists, on the other hand, from not clearly seeing what the *dolus latens* is in the affirmation that we always seek pleasure, enunciate a series of declarations which, as Green says, 'offend the unsophisticated conscience.'<sup>1</sup> Let us endeavour to elucidate the situation a little. I have gone over this point once in a work already before the public,<sup>2</sup> but deem that it will be of advantage to apply the same thoughts to the particular case before us, since I believe that over the questions here raised broods the thickest fog that at present obscures the true theory of ethics. Whether our efforts are or not effectual in dispelling the mists (and of this others must judge), I am sure even the attempt is useful.

Every present experience involves both cognition and feeling, else there would be no consciousness. We cannot explain what we mean by *cognition* or by *feeling*, except by referring to the experience. To know is to know; to feel is to feel. In every state of consciousness there is an objective and a subjective side. I distinguish (cognition) an object (presentative if you please) from myself and regard it as other than myself, but existing then with relation to myself. With this object<sup>3</sup> is experienced feeling. If the feeling is painful, volition moves to eliminate the object from experience. If the feeling is relatively indifferent or pleasurable, there is no volitional movement beyond that of attention, or that movement necessary to retain the object in consciousness. When the object (as cognised) disappears it is liable to recurrence or representation. When the object is represented, the accompanying feeling is represented, both being fainter than the original presentation. I know (cognition) that when that object was presentative I experienced pleasure (feeling) which was stronger than the pleasure now experienced. A want (feeling) is thus experienced, alternating (probably) with a representative pleasure (feeling), which is attached to the representative object (cognition), inducing the belief (cognition) that if the representative object again became presentative, I should have a recurrence of

<sup>1</sup> Book III. chap. i. 157.

<sup>2</sup> *System of Psychology*, chap. lxix. sec. 22 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Of course our actual experience is not of one but of many objects in co-existence and succession; but perhaps I can be better understood by using the simpler expression, and can do this without substantial inaccuracy.

the same strength of pleasure, thus assuaging the want. At this juncture there are open two courses of mental action. The attention may be fixed upon a cognition of the pleasure experienced in the presentative experience, or it may be fixed upon the object itself with a view of bringing that object into presentative experience. Let us take a definite example. Suppose I for the first time drink a glass of wine. Pleasure ensues. I afterward remember the drinking of that wine, and a desire for a glass of wine is created. I may now direct my thought to the pleasure of drinking that wine; I represent myself as drinking it, and dwell in thought upon the sensations of pleasure I experienced. I thus evoke a considerable amount of pleasurable feeling, which is the pleasure accompanying the cognition of the pleasure of drinking the glass of wine; but while I am evoking this pleasure my activity is paralysed. I am contenting myself with a pleasurable contemplation, and the want satisfies itself for the moment in this contemplation. On the other hand, I may direct my attention upon the glass of wine as an object, and possess myself with the thought that if I had it I should enjoy the original pleasure. This thought tends rather to increase than diminish the present urgency, and stimulates me to activity to get the wine. I desire the glass of wine, and my energies are bent to obtain it and drink it. From this line of consideration, pursued to any extent desirable, we see that Green was right in his assertion that men do not always make pleasure, or any particular pleasure, as a subjective feeling, experience the object (intellectual) of desire. In this sense it is true that men do not always seek pleasure. But he was wrong in claiming that subjective feeling as pain does not furnish the motive, and subjective feeling as pleasure the sole *end* of action. On the other hand, the hedonists are wrong where they assert that the *object* of volition and action is always pleasure, but right in their claim that it is always the *end* of volition and action. In this last sense only it is true that men do always seek pleasure.

When there is desire for primary pleasures, namely, those of the fundamental appetitive sensations, if the urgency is great we are not able to satisfy the want by contemplation. We cannot content our stomachs by dwelling in imagination upon a good dinner. We can lessen our activity for the moment by doing so, but the organic need increases. We must seek things cognised, the possession of which experience has taught us will relieve the

present pain. This is true of all the appetites so far as they demand self-preservation. It is also to a considerable degree the same with respect to the reproductive appetite. When great organic urgency is present, it demands real and not ideal satisfaction. So necessary is this that our activity is always largely directed toward securing the means of gratifying primary desires. In this way we are always educated by life itself to desire objects in Green's sense. And it must not be forgotten in this connection that one of the primary appetites is that of movement and exercise. Thus it comes that we have a pleasure in pursuit which hence 'is an end in itself.' This fact has very important bearings on the questions before us. For with a natural appetite for activity to begin with, according to the admitted laws of the formation of habits, the pursuit of any object, even of self-perfection, may become an end in itself, irrespective of the attainment. But just now it is enough to note this circumstance, and place in connection with it the further fact that we have also a natural appetitive urgency toward repose, which is intermittent with the appetite for movement. The two often nullify each other very curiously, though both are necessary to self-conservation. For instance, from the impulse to secure repose we may be impelled to such activity that the *pursuit* of repose may become itself the self-sufficient end. And thus it is that a phase of this pleasure of repose enters into our contemplation of the subjective pleasure of obtaining anything, thus lessening or suspending our activity to secure it.

Hence, as intelligence increases in complexity, this increase exhibiting a great development of representative power, innumerable secondary ends arise. These are first (logically and, in a general way, chronologically) the pleasures of material objects, around which are clustered in association the primary pleasures; next, actions or states which are directly conducive to securing primary pleasures; then actions or states more representative still, but with the same tendencies; and, finally, tertiary pleasures, including the most general and abstract notions of what are regarded as causes of pleasures. Thus courses of action, habits, and dispositions are formed, whose ends may be either those of pursuit of some object, or of the enjoyment of things contemplated as attained. These ends are all formed by experiences of pain and pleasure, have pain and pleasure as moving causes, and in pleasure have their sole significance of accomplishment. If it were not for

the pleasure anticipated in this accomplishment they would cease to be ends, and would not be desired.

As more general ends are formed, the constitution and circumstances of the individual determine whether they are self-sufficient or are to become intermediate to other ends. They also determine what ends are actually created, and in this whether they are predominantly ends of activity or of passivity. If the attention is prevailingly directed toward pleasurable feeling as such, it is quite easy to see how the moral initiative may be weakened which, in Green's opinion, constitutes such a strong objection to hedonism. The author of the 'Prolegomena' puts this very forcibly, and undoubtedly the result which he deprecates often does follow from making pleasure an end. The moral energy may be diminished from dwelling upon imaginations of pleasure, for the reason already explained that concentrating the attention upon one's state of enjoyment diminishes activity. It may also be lessened by the conviction that if we have no power to desire anything but pleasure, or enjoy anything but what we do enjoy, effort is useless, and the only thing to do is to make the most of what comes. But such a conviction would be false to fact. Nothing in what has been claimed by the best authorities of hedonism leads to any such conclusion. Every doctrine is liable to misconstruction, and a theory which is true ought not to be held responsible for erroneous deductions from it. Certainly, it would be a curious procedure, if for the reason that people do not understand or correctly apply a true principle, we banished that principle and substituted false doctrines because people would be more likely to misunderstand the latter to their advantage. The result of our examination thus far has been to show that, while we have no power to propose to ourselves ends which do not receive their distinctive character as ends from the fact that they are pleasures, and their accomplishment involves pleasure, we do have the capacity to propose, and are all the time proposing, ends and accomplishing them without abstracting the notion of pleasure and consciously aiming for it. In fact, I am unable to see that Green can successfully avoid the conclusions which we have thus reached, after his admission that the satisfaction of a desire always involves pleasure. We have already noted how the objection that the satisfaction of a desire postulates the desire as first existing avails nothing against the hedonistic doctrine properly explained, because if the desire is not the anticipated pleasure, no more is it the



present pain, but it involves both; and until the object with its anticipated pleasure appears, there is no desire for that object, while the anticipated pleasure, as extinguishing the present pain, *constitutes* the object as desired in distinction from other objects which enter the mind but are not desired. The whole of Green's reasoning on the topic of desire (which is a fundamental point in his philosophy) is vitiated by his failure to make a thorough analysis of this mental state. If he had made such analysis, he never would have enunciated the remarkable proposition that a thing is ever pleasurable because we desire it, and that we do not in such cases desire it because it is pleasurable.

But this weakening of moral initiative to make one's self better is no less liable to occur under Green's doctrine than under the hedonistic. A man may become as intoxicated with the contemplation of himself as having the good will as he may become with the imaginations of himself enjoying pleasure, or, as I should prefer to say, any *other* pleasure. He may also have his 'moral initiative' weakened by the thought that perfection is unattainable, and that we even cannot know what perfection is; hence, it is useless to do anything more than to indulge one's self in beatific visions, and persuade one's self that he has the good will. In its practical applications the doctrine of perfection may also weaken the moral initiative. For, if man is bound by the imperative to 'exercise the recognised virtues and excellences,'<sup>1</sup> he may not consider that he has any business to depart from what custom enjoins; on the other hand, if he avails himself of the exception allowed by Green, his activity is in danger of running so far into egoism as to subordinate the recognised morality to individual selfishness. Of course, I do not mean to claim that these are inevitable results of the *Æstho*-egoistic ethics, but I point them out as evil consequences just as likely to ensue from the adoption of these principles, and just as pernicious in quality and quantity as any ill effects either actually seen or reasonably to be anticipated from hedonistic doctrines.

Perhaps we have sufficiently considered for present purposes what ends men actually desire to achieve. We will accordingly pass to questions which arise respecting the *desirable* and what ought to be desired. We have allowed that people form ideals of Good and Better, which they propose to themselves as ends of possible attainment, as desirable to be realised. And it is well

<sup>1</sup> Book IV. chap. iv. 380.

enough to call attention to the circumstance that Good may mean my Good—i.e. of the Ego—or it may mean the general or social Good. It would seem as if Green and the hedonists were in accord in declaring that the Good to the individual is a state of consciousness. The hedonists call this state pleasure; Green terms it self-satisfaction. With the hedonists the good generically is the pleasant; with Green the common characteristic of the good is that it satisfies some desire. To be sure, in all satisfaction of desire there is pleasure, and thus pleasantness in an object is a necessary incident of its being good; but its pleasantness depends on its goodness, not its goodness upon the pleasure it conveys.<sup>1</sup> Both Green and the hedonists agree also in the result that the individual good must be limited by a social or general good common to all individuals. They concur in asserting that no individual is morally good without his taking into consideration with favourable volition the social good. Both aver that the social good is the same in principle with the individual good; Green, that the social good is a state of self-satisfaction on the part of all the individuals included within the community; the hedonists, that it is the pleasure of all such individuals. It is thus substantially agreed that the moral good is the social or common good. It may be legitimately inferred, I think, from both sets of doctrines that individuals do not always desire the common good. There is hence an opposition of some sort between individual good as desired and common good. All this seems to follow naturally enough from Green's words, and also from the enunciations of the hedonists.

We may regard the *desirable* as what *may* be desired, that is, what is capable of being desired. In that sense everything which possibly can be the object of desire is desirable; what has been desired, whatever experience has shown may be an object of desire, is desirable. For reasons already expressed, the present writer would aver that in the sense explained all desirable objects are pleasures—that is, their distinctive quality as desirable comes from their pleasurable quality. This would, of course, be denied by Green. Anything may be desired by a person, and may be esteemed as desirable for other persons; so far forth, however, as it is desired by him, it is not to him desirable, because already desired. Whenever an object is presented by the Ego to himself as desirable *for him*, it becomes desired to some degree. He may

<sup>1</sup> Book III. chap. i. 171.

present some object as desirable for other people; that means, he desires other people to desire that object for themselves, though he does not desire it for himself. What one desires that someone else shall desire is, then, a desirable object. Thus an idea of the desirable as what ought to be desired appears. I posit a common good (as desirable) for other people, and then include myself under its obligations. Hence, when I say an object is desirable for me in the sense that it ought to be desired but is not, all I can possibly mean is that I desire that I might be under such influences and conditions as to desire that object more strongly and pre-vaillingly. In other words, there is a conflict of desires. But it does not follow from this that my desire that I might desire does not receive its significance from the pleasurable anticipation connected with realising the first desire, and ultimately the second also. In the same way it is quite possible for me actually to desire that I might desire the sensational pleasure of eating, though conscious I do not. The actual desire is faint, and I wish it were stronger. Hence, a desired object may still be desirable in the sense that I desire to have a stronger desire for it. Thus, when I think that an object is desirable for me and ought to be desired, it must be explained thus:—I desire that the object A be desired by other people. I desire Non-A. But I am aware that if other people are to be made to desire A, they will do it only on condition that I desire A. So far forth as I desire Non-A I defeat my own desire that other people shall desire A. Hence, I desire that I might desire A. I also may be aware that other people on their own account desire that I desire A; and my fears of them enter into the sentiment, I say I ought to desire A. If, as a result of this process or otherwise, I cease to desire Non-A and do prevaillingly desire A, I cease to think that I *ought* to desire A, because conscious that I *do* desire A. It will thus be observed that while an object prevaillingly and consistently desired cannot be said to be desirable for the person so desiring by himself, but only with relation to other persons, it is still true that it is only actual incipient desire that creates the feeling that he ought to desire, or that a thing is desirable for him. This incipency comes from having previously desired the object as something to be sought by others. And this incipient desire is prevented from growing to full desire by the alternation and pressure of other conflicting desires.

The foregoing, I apprehend, is the true meaning of the desir-

able in relation to the common good, and is a true account of the way in which the latter comes to be the desired in the individual mind. It ought not to escape our notice that the influence of all the sympathetic regards must be counted in addition. These do not always favour the common good, but they do favour the good of some others than self; and without this foundation there would never have been even the nucleus of society. The numbers included within the protection of the idea of common good have been increasing from small beginnings, irregularly, but still very sensibly, throughout the whole history of the race.

I am unable to see that Green can pass, or that he passes, from the theoretical to the practical part of his ethics by any other route than the above. But all this is hedonistic doctrine of felt want and anticipated pleasure—to assuage it the motive and end of all action. So, to use Green's own expression, in order to make sense of his utterances, they must be construed and explained by principles which he repudiates. For, having once detected the insufficiencies in his analysis of desire, and discovered the groundlessness of his fundamental distinction of principle from the hedonists upon the question whether or not we always desire pleasure, the dispute becomes largely one of terminology, with the odds greatly in favour of the hedonists. When, therefore, Green reiterates that the true good is ultimately self-satisfaction, and that self can only contemplate itself as attaining satisfaction in some sort of society, 'can only look forward to a satisfaction of itself on condition that it shall also be a satisfaction to those in community with whom alone it can think of itself as continuing to live,'<sup>1</sup> we must again ask what he means. Why can self only contemplate itself as attaining satisfaction in the satisfaction of others in the community? Or, if there is no answer to the question *why*, there is at least an answer to the question *how*? We can only ascertain by careful analysis of the facts of human mental constitution as we know them. This analysis brings us at once to the conclusions of the hedonists, which express in definite and the lowest terms what Green puts forth in language indefinite, very general, and itself continually in need of explanation.

When we come to the practical side of ethics—that is, the rules of right conduct, as we have heretofore observed—we are thrown back upon the ultimate notion of a Chief Good as a common good, which both Green and the hedonists explain by reference to the

<sup>1</sup> Book III. chap. iv. 232.

individual good. But the hedonists declare that the desirable state of consciousness is a state characteristically pleasurable. The ideal state would be a continued pleasurable state with no pain. This is expressed by the term *happiness*; and when the social good is proposed as a limitation upon the individual, the happiness of all individuals is taken into the account. *Better* and *worse*, then, are determined by estimates of the quantity of happiness. To this method of procedure Green objects on the ground that it involves an absurdity. But I am compelled to think he makes out an absurdity only by supposing positions that are not held by the hedonists. Green seems to consider that the hedonists hold an ideal of the Chief Good as of all pleasures added up and concentrated into one intense enjoyment. 'There is no such thing as a state of feeling made up of a sum of pleasures.' 'However numerous the sources of a state of pleasant feeling, it is one and is over before another can be enjoyed. It and its successors can be added together in thought, but not in enjoyment or in imagination of enjoyment.'<sup>1</sup> The author might have saved himself the trouble of making statements like these. They only show that he never thoroughly understood the hedonistic philosophy. It is to be wished that he had cited some hedonistic authority claiming the truth of the doctrine he seeks to refute. Perhaps he apprehended that somebody would become intoxicated with hedonism as with new wine, and soberly enunciate such a theory. We can scarcely share his fear, and we think it would be difficult to find anyone of present hedonistic teachers who has thus run mad. What the hedonists do mean by the maximum happiness principle is precisely what Green declares they do not mean, but ought to mean, in order 'to make sense' of their doctrine. Indeed, it may be believed that most hedonists would substantially endorse the following passages, which Green employs in his refutation of hedonism. 'It is not the pleasures *as a sum* that attract him [i.e. man]. . . . What affects him is the thought of himself as capable of a state of continuous enjoyable existence, and on the contrary as liable to a like continuity of pain.' If he rejects a pleasure it is not because he presents to himself two possible sums of pleasure, and pronounces the sum with the rejected pleasure left out to be the larger and thus the more desirable. 'It is because he believes the pleasure which he disapproves to entail an unnecessary breach in the enjoyable existence which he wishes for, without

<sup>1</sup> Book III. chap. iv. 221.

reference to any sum of pleasures that an enumerator might find it to contain.'<sup>1</sup> Although Green thinks this is more consistent hedonism, he is not satisfied with it. He esteems that such a sentiment would not avail against the attraction of imagined pleasure. We think it would and does all the time. But let us see what Green approves. 'In truth a man's reference to his own true happiness is a reference to the objects which chiefly interest him, and has its controlling power on that account. More strictly it is a reference to an ideal state of well-being, a state in which he shall be satisfied; but the objects of the man's chief interests supply the filling of that ideal state. . . . Just because we wish for the attainment of such objects we are unhappy till we attain them; and thus, owing to the difficulty of mentally articulating them, we are apt to lump them in our thoughts as happiness. But they do not consist in pleasures. The ideas of them which we are seeking to realise are not ideas of pleasures. . . . In short, it is the realisation of those objects in which we are mainly interested, not the succession of enjoyments which we shall experience in realising them, that forms the definite content of our idea of true happiness so far as it has such content at all.'<sup>2</sup>

Again, we meet with the endless repetition which occurs in Green's work of his declarations about desire and pleasure. Here, again, we encounter that persistent misunderstanding of the meaning of desire for pleasure, that confusion of objects and ends which constitutes the warp and woof of his philosophy. It is not too much to say that his whole ethical doctrine rests upon his explanation of desire. If he has upon this point raised any substantial psychological objection to hedonistic principles, or if he has shown any ground for his own, he may have laid a basis for his philosophy. If, on the contrary, he has not done this, his whole edifice falls to the ground. I have shown some reasons for my own conviction that there is nothing substantial whatever in his assertions on this topic, and can do no more than to relegate further examination to others. As to the passages just quoted—of course a man's chief interests supply the filling of his ideal state of happiness. The securing of those objects is his aim. The ideas of them are, indeed, not ideas of the pleasures as abstracted from the objects. But they never would be held up as objects of desire if they were not by experience and association known as pleasurable, and *as such* affording the relief from present pain.

<sup>1</sup> Book III. chap. iv. 223.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Let us now epitomise the hedonistic ethical philosophy, as we did that of Green a few pages back.<sup>1</sup> As ethical, we start with the assumption that the Chief Good is a common or social good. How this idea of common good arises I have endeavoured to show.

1. The Chief Ideal Good is the existence of all individuals without pain, presentative or representative, during the period of this existence. Since happiness is the excess of pleasure over pain, the entire exclusion of pain would be the highest happiness, or greatest happiness.<sup>2</sup>

2. Right conduct is that which tends to secure the maximum happiness of all individuals, or the highest happiness of the greatest number. Right volition is the volition to act according to the requirements of securing the Chief Good.

I am not able to see how a state of social perfection, wherein all individuals are self-satisfied in the consciousness of their own perfection, is anything different from a state of maximum happiness with no pain. For it certainly could not be claimed that man is perfect while he remains subject to what is called physical evil and there is any way of lessening this. Nor is he any more perfect if he is troubled by moral evil. The ideal of perfection, then, would involve the elimination of both moral and physical evil as far as possible. According to Green, the stimulus to improvement comes from a felt want or dissatisfaction creating the conviction that there must be a Better and a Best. Unless, then, willing to be perfect constitutes perfection, the Chief Good must be attainment. While this stimulus to improvement continues the end is not attained. But if this attainment is a permanent state of self-satisfaction in the knowledge that perfection has been attained, and this knowledge can subsist only in the knowledge that all moral and physical evil has been eliminated, so far as is possible for any human power, there is no visible difference between Green's ideal and the hedonistic.

But we have much difficulty all along from the fact that Green appears clearly enough to hold that the willing to be perfect, or the good will, is the Chief Good. We have already discussed his *circulus in probando*, and noted that he glories in it. We have

<sup>1</sup> Page 54 of this work.

<sup>2</sup> I am aware that Mr. H. Sidgwick would criticise this statement, but I will not branch off into a side controversy with him; one quarrel at a time is enough. If the reader does not think the averments in this paragraph are fair statements of hedonistic doctrine he can readily substitute the usual formula like this, 'The Chief Good is the highest happiness of the greatest number.'

also urged that if perfection consists in the willing to be perfect we are led to egoism, which we can only get rid of by appealing to some other standard of the Good than the one adopted. We also commented upon the *sophisma extra dictionem* by which Green attempts to connect logically his practical rules of duty with his theoretical principles. His statements are assuredly not consistent. At one time he seems to regard the *attainment* of perfection as the chief good; at another the *disposition* to secure the attainment of perfection. If he really meant the former, he is only a universalistic hedonist in disguise. If he meant the latter, he has nothing at all for an objective standard of Good, except as he borrows from those whom he sets up as his antagonists, and has no subjective standard except a self-reflecting and self-centred consciousness of the individual as perfect in his will to be perfect. Thus, it seems, we are justified in characterising his system, so far as it is not utilitarian, as a system of *Æstho-Egoism*.

The system of utilitarianism, or universalistic hedonism, is not egoistic. It does allow that all individual action must have reference to an end as realised or achieved *by the individual*. In this view it might be claimed to be egoistic, but in this sense every system involving action or conduct is egoistic. This sense merely expresses a fact of all human activity whatever, moral and non-moral. Utilitarianism, or universalistic hedonism, proposes a *moral law*—that is, a law of conduct involving the limitation and direction of the individualistic activity for an end which is not egoistic further than that which is involved in the requirement that the individual find his happiness in the happiness of others. The social end is in itself a restriction of activity toward egoistic ends. It is held as superior to all egoistic ends, and as dominant over them, except as the Ego makes the social end his end, in which case they coincide. But the law that each person make the highest happiness of the greatest number his end is contradictory to the proposition that each make his own happiness his end, save as the two are made to agree in the manner above stated. It is a fact that men *do* often seek their own happiness in self-centred activity; it is also true that they can learn to find their happiness in the happiness of others. The former is egoism, the latter altruism. Utilitarianism enjoins the latter, because in no other way can its Chief Good be obtained; in no other manner can there be secured a coalescence of ends, a concurrence of dispositions, and that organic union which is absolutely necessary to the realisation of



the common good. Thus, altruism comes to be the great desideratum of universalistic hedonism.

Here we come upon a most surprising misconception on the part of Green. He tells us that a Benthamite would repudiate as unintelligible the notion of an absolute value in the individual person. 'It is not every person, according to him, but every pleasure that is of value in itself.'<sup>1</sup> He then goes on to say that the utilitarian does not adopt the logical consequences of his principles, but has to repudiate them in order to get his practical precepts. Green allows subsequently that the great service of utilitarianism has been in magnifying the value of the individual by insisting that it is the greatest number which is to be taken into account. Whatever a Benthamite ought to believe, according to Green, I do not imagine one has been actually found who claimed that pleasure meant anything at all, save with reference to a person enjoying pleasure, and certainly, in the most egoistic form of hedonism, the personal Ego is of the supremest value, nor does he consider pleasure to be of value in itself, but himself as enjoying pleasure he regards as his end. When, therefore, instead of an ideal of his own selfish happiness as a supreme end, he gains an ideal of the happiness of others and then of all; others as persons are raised in his estimation of their value, because he considers them more as possessing his own feelings, sympathises with them more, and enters more fully into their life. Unless, then, there is some hidden, transcendental meaning in the word '*absolute*,' as applied to value, or in the word *value* itself, which I have failed to reach, I can see no force in Green's accusation above referred to. He probably attributed the saving grace in utilitarianism to the unconscious influence of principles like his own, counteracting the hedonistic virus. To me utilitarianism seems a natural development from hedonistic premises. It is not worth while, however, to spend time over a question already covered by the previous discussion, and to be still further elucidated by what we are now for a moment to consider.

Thinkers of Green's stamp appear to have much difficulty over what has been aptly called 'The Fundamental Paradox of Hedonism.' Certainly it is on its face no more of a paradox than that involved in Green's *circulus in probando*, on which he prides himself so much, and is much easier of resolution. We have already noted<sup>2</sup> how very like this hedonistic paradox are some of Green's own state-

<sup>1</sup> Book III. chap. iii. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Page 52 of this work.

ments in attempting to reconcile his individual with the social Chief Good. This goes to show that the paradox in question is not a peculiarity coming from hedonistic vagaries in assertion and reasoning, leading to a *reductio ad absurdum* for hedonism, but expresses an ultimate fact of human mental constitution. This fact is no other than the inverse variation of feeling and cognition, to which we referred in Chapter IV., with its consequences upon conduct. Within a certain range, when feeling is greater in quantity, cognition is less. The more the consciousness is feeling-consciousness the less it is cognitive-consciousness, and generally the more feeling-consciousness is cultivated at the expense of cognitive activity, the less power reason has as a guide and controller of conduct. The connection, as influencing volition, between remote, or more representative and general, ends and present action is not so strong as between more presentative ends and present action. This we express by saying that the man becomes blinded by feeling, cannot see his true interest, has his will weakened, and the like. Now, when we make pleasure—that is, the enjoyment of pleasurable feeling as such—the direct end of effort, we are continually engrossed with feeling, our activity is diminished, we become more and more contented with presentative pleasures, remote painful consequences are lost sight of, all idea of increased happiness from conservation is eliminated, our horizon is narrowed, and we sink into the apathy of the voluptuary, with no more power to change our disposition and, at last, with no more good left upon which to satisfy the dispositional cravings which we have already formed. The reverse of this happens when we make the attainment of some object other than abstracted feeling, and whose utility has been intellectually determined, our end of effort. Activity, not passivity, follows, conservation is fostered, vitality is increased. It appears from considerations like these, which I need not amplify, because I have treated the topic more fully in another place,<sup>1</sup> that even for egoistic hedonism some reason can be found in self-denial, which must become practically operative wherever there is intelligence.

When the social good is made prominent, the inculcation of altruism not only needs no explanation, but appears obviously as the best means to the end. The altruistic disposition, if prevalent, avoids much of the difficulty of the hedonistic calculus, to which last Green is not more alive than Mill, Bain, Spencer, Sidgwick,

<sup>1</sup> *System of Psychology*, chaps. lxvi.–lxix. more especially.

and Stephen. If a governing disposition obtain, creating a habit of action, extra-regarding and not self-regarding, we have only to enlighten the mind as to what is better for humanity's sake, and to increase the circle of regards so as to include humanity as a whole. Without this, enlightenment is wholly in vain; men are not made virtuous by making them understand intellectually what virtue is. With such a disposition, however, errors of judgment may, indeed, be committed, but the strength of activity which makes a man a force in the community is thrown on the social side, not in opposition. He is with us, not against us. It is this fact that gives its strength, and its only force, to Kant's declaration that 'There is nothing in the world which can be termed absolutely and altogether good, a good will alone excepted.' When Kant wrote this, psychological analysis was imperfect, the springs of human action were not fully disclosed, the doctrines of evolution had not been formulated, hedonism meant sensual pleasure, as opposed to the 'ethics of the dust,' which he beheld advocated; he thought he discerned a better way. His enunciation in regard to the good will did have a meaning of great practical import. But its value arises from the circumstance that the good will, as a pre-vaillingly altruistic disposition, is the only means by which the social end can be obtained, not that it is the social end in itself.

We have now examined and criticised the leading positions of that non-theological system of ethics which I have ventured to characterise as *Æstho-egoistic*. Other points, indeed, remain to be discussed, but I trust we have covered the most essential. This examination has been attempted because the present writer has observed a strong impression created among thinking men by Green's work, not merely as to the ability with which he has written, nor yet by the high personal character of the man himself (in regard to both of which I should add most cordially my own tribute of praise), but by the supposed truth of what he has enunciated, and the belief that he has reached a new and a better point of view. In this last belief I must confess I do not share. I have given some reasons for my conviction that it is no better, and were there space I might also give some for the assertion that it is not new. If anyone will read over Kant's '*Metaphysic of Ethic*' he will find the entire groundwork of Green's practical philosophy of morals; while if he pursues his investigations into the more speculative works of Kant and of Hegel he will find the inspiration and the philosophical authority for the whole. Indeed,

Green would not have denied this, and I make the reference only because his work appears to strike some students as exhibiting a novelty of doctrine. Value that work has, no doubt, but I apprehend that it lies in the incentives it supplies by its criticisms to repairing, smoothing, and improving the old and travelled road, not to abandoning it and following others which have become disused, or making a new one. Green has referred to the hedonistic philosophy as an anachronism. Very possibly it may so seem to those who live in the atmosphere of a century ago. But they must not forget that their doctrine also appears anachronistic to us who believe otherwise, and that we shall continue to insist upon their substantiating their views by all the means necessary to produce conviction of truth. When the followers of Kant and Hegel have done this, I am sure nobody will yield more graceful acquiescence than the hedonists; but until this is done they will not be disturbed by any assertion that hedonistic philosophy is 'played out,' or that their system is 'anachronistic.'<sup>1</sup>

I have had occasion to observe a style of criticism upon English experiential (and hedonistic) philosophers, which seems to take for granted that the latter know nothing of what Kant and his followers have written. This inference appears to be drawn from the fact that the experientialists do not deem it necessary to support every assertion they make by explaining what relation it bears to the Kantian doctrine. To those who indulge in this sort of inference I venture to suggest if it is not just possible that Kant might have been heard of or even read by the objects of their criticism, with the result of a conviction that all of importance in Kant and his followers may be stated in more intelligible and significant phraseology than that which appertains to the Kantian methods of expression; and that what is not of importance need not longer be mentioned, nor need the omission to mention it be justified by an apology. If this be conceivable, it is just possible also that a more thorough study on the part of the critics themselves might lessen their conviction of the 'absolute' value of both the Kantian 'metaphysic' and 'ethic.'

As for us, we can agree partially with Professor Green. We believe that the study of Kant and Hegel is of advantage to prevent one-sidedness, too great confidence in other systems, and for the purpose of obtaining many valuable suggestions. But this study should be followed after a foundation has been laid in a

<sup>1</sup> Introduction II. to Hume, Conclusion.

sound experiential philosophy. We should certainly hope that the former would be pursued by Englishmen over rather 'than 'under five and twenty.' To these last we should strongly recommend that they direct their attention homeward to the works of the thinkers who have caused the value of philosophy, in its relations to the practical concerns of life, to be generally recognised, who have made the knowledge of mind and mental processes to become a *science* instead of a speculation, and not to go a-wandering after strange philosophies.

Notwithstanding that we concede the excellent moral tone of Green's work, and allow also that he has said many things which are both beautiful and good, we must, I think, in the face of his criticism, still regard the ethics of hedonism as 'that good philosophy to which we shall always be obliged to return.'

## CHAPTER X.

'*NATURAM OBSERVARE*.'

IN one of his 'Three Essays on Religion' John Stuart Mill discusses the ancient precept *Naturam sequi*. The author first proceeds to show the different senses in which the word may be taken, and then raises the question whether, if Nature be understood as standing for that which takes place without human intervention, man ought to make the spontaneous course of things the model of his voluntary actions? In answer, Mill maintains that the maxim above cited is both irrational and immoral—'Irrational, because all human action whatever consists in altering, and all useful action in improving, the spontaneous course of nature; immoral, because the course of natural phenomena being replete with everything which when committed by human beings is most worthy of abhorrence, anyone who endeavoured in his actions to imitate the natural course of things would be universally seen and acknowledged to be the wickedest of men.' On the other hand, if Nature be a collective name for everything that is, the direction to follow Nature is meaningless, because we have no power to do anything else.

Mill's position, that if we adopt *Naturam sequi* as a rule of action we are likely to be irrational and to promote immorality, is undoubtedly a sound one, if we adopt it in the sense that Mill states. If to follow nature means, as his illustrations seem to indicate, negatively, to cease all efforts at improvement by art, and, positively, to imitate the killing, the torturing, the devastation accomplished by nature in its course, then no one will say that the precept is anything but harmful. Civilised men, however, do not follow nature in this sense, though perhaps the savage may so act. Some forms of religious belief, indeed, deprecate activity to alter circumstances, because these latter indicate the will of the Deity. We sometimes hear also laudation of a certain line of conduct on the ground that it is stimulated by natural instincts.

To this last-mentioned set of impulses Mill refers as one of the dangerous results of indorsing the rule in question. In so far as he seeks to show the fallaciousness of moral principles based upon the acknowledgment of instinct or appetite as the controlling guide of conduct, the essay accomplishes a good purpose.

An impression, however, is created by reading what Mill has to say upon this theme which, in my judgment, it is not desirable to favour. I confess that to me this essay is the least satisfactory of Mill's published writings. It seems to serve as a preface or introduction to the author's doctrine that there is a supernatural Being who presides over human destinies, whose power is limited, who is himself striving all the while to subdue nature, and with whom it is man's duty to co-operate to this end. This is Mill's theology, and if we had no other expression from him we should almost place him in the same category with other theological nature-haters that regard nature as an estate of the devil, who is kept in possession as a tenant-at-will of the Almighty for some mysterious reason, which we cannot fathom, but are bound, out of respect to the Deity, to believe is entirely good.

It should not be forgotten that while undoubtedly many extravagances, leading to deleterious moral sentiments, have been committed by those who have urged *Naturam sequi* as a precept for conduct, equally dangerous errors have followed the doctrine that nature is the enemy of God and man. This latter notion, to which Mill seems to incline in the particular disquisition before us, has been the source of all that ascetic morality which inculcates the duty of mortifying the flesh, of despising the things conducive to material comfort and prosperity, and likewise of that theology which postulates that the child of nature is also the child of the devil. It is curious to find the great utilitarian talking like a monk; but the difficulty is, he has presented only one side of the questions raised by the theme. He seems to be holding a brief; to be making an argument, exhibiting one side prominently and obscuring the other—finally leading up to the theological hypothesis above mentioned. This method of treating a subject is foreign to the author's usual style; for there is scarcely any writer who, as a rule, is so careful to look comprehensively, to examine a topic upon all sides, and show all its bearings in a thoroughly judicial manner. Hence, the essay on Nature disappoints, and we can but think that if the author had lived to revise his work we should have had not only a more finished but

also a more thoroughgoing and symmetrical treatise upon this theme, in which these sins of omission of which I have been speaking would themselves have been omitted.

The direction, *Naturam observare*, placed at the head of this chapter, Mill commends as a rational and moral precept. But is it true that we ought only to observe nature for the purpose of defeating nature? Certainly not in the sense mentioned, in which nature means 'the entire system of things with the aggregate of all their properties,' for it would be of no use. Nature will defeat us, and we shall be ground to powder. In fact, our own efforts would be a part of the machinery to effect our discomfiture. In the other sense, however, the question arises whether, since we are in respect at least to our physical system a part of nature, we should not find in the course of nature a stimulus to activity in the moral and social order along lines which are indicated by the general method of nature's operations.

Mill can scarcely be said to have apprehended the full force of the law of evolution. He was acquainted with Spencer and a part of Spencer's work, but he was not informed of the extensive application of the doctrine to the super-organic world. It is as true in regard to all the departments of human activity as it is with respect to the action of inorganic and vital forces, that there is a *progressus* from the simple, indefinite, and homogeneous to the complex, the definite, and the heterogeneous. This general fact has some important bearings upon the determination of the answer to the questions suggested in the last paragraph.

The writer whom we had occasion to criticise in the last chapter devoted himself very zealously to the vindication of the independence of the active powers of the human mind as respects nature and control by the forces of nature. Green maintained the existence of a spiritual principle in man, which is not natural and which must be presupposed in all human activity.

The question is often asked, Why should I trouble myself about progress? Why should I ask questions about myself and my destiny? Why should I seek to be other than I am? The answer may seem to be trifling with the queries, but I opine in each case the proper answer is simply, Because I do! I cannot help doing so. It is a law of my nature that I should; or, as Green puts it, an eternal principle within me which constitutes me, forces me to do these things. In other words, there is in the action of each Ego implied and postulated a subjective source of



activity which somehow acts, or appears to act, upon an environment, and is affected by it as action and reaction reciprocally influence each other.

It is not an Hegelian philosophy that either discovered the truth implied in these remarks, or has been most faithful in keeping it in view. I read it even in the writings of both Spencer and Bain, not to mention other experientialists. All knowledge postulates a subject which is not known. But when we examine into the mode of the exercise of this subjective activity, we discover that we know only objectifications of this postulated self. We know these only as they come within the laws of all knowledge; in other words, they are subject to cognised uniformities. This is true of all exercises of activity; we know that they occur in certain ways, and these exercises of activity are only cognised as under the conditions by which they may be cognised, which are conditions of the cognition, not of themselves alone but of all objects whatsoever, material or mental. Thus there are laws of mental action, and hence the knowledge of mind as we know it, and if we know it, must be a natural science. It is a science consisting in the observation of uniformities, as all science consists. These uniformities involve succession of objects presented to the mind. These objects are under conditions of time. They have a beginning and an end. They come and go; and our knowledge of them postulates a cause and a source. They are produced from something and by something. Hence, although the subject Ego is excluded from nature, that which we call its manifestations cannot be. If they were we should not know them at all. Nature is the sum total of what is produced, and, so far as something produced produces something else, the term also includes that which produces or causes to be produced. Nature is the entire object world, not merely the world of material objects.

When we proceed to ascertain what the uniformities are in mental events, we find that, as respecting the lines of change and progress, these uniformities are expressed by precisely the same law which expresses the uniformities of change in the material world, namely, the law of evolution and dissolution. In pursuance of this truth we notice that the proximate explanation of the fact of any change whatever is the instability of the homogeneous. Homogeneity inevitably lapses into heterogeneity, leading to multiplication of effects, and then to a new unity through separation and segregation. Of course, this does not tell us anything

with regard to ultimate questions, but when we ask these we reach the limits of knowledge. We may ask, Why do I exist? But there is no answer, nor are we able to see how there can be an answer in human knowledge. So when we inquire, Why is there change? we can elicit no response from mind or matter. Our knowledge is limited to ascertaining *how* there is change.

We may, if we choose, explain the fact that change occurs by the supposition of an eternal consciousness reproducing itself gradually in the mind of man. So far as this has meaning it means the same thing—a power unknown, save in its manifestations, necessarily postulated as source and cause of all things which do appear and proceed. We get no more information. The expression, however varied, points always to the same fact.

Whatever may be our theories of the connection of mind and body, or of the mutual relationships of mind and matter generally, it is evident that there is a relationship, and also that there appears to be a mutual exclusion. Indeed, it seems to me that the antithesis is fundamental. I do not see any power in mind to identify itself with matter without self-contradiction in the thought. For both the phenomena of mind and the phenomena of matter we must postulate substances; but we cannot refer the two sets to the same substance, though unable to affirm positively that the two substances *may* not be one, because we are unable to affirm anything whatever as to their nature. Yet, notwithstanding the opposition between mind and matter, there are relations between the two and their phenomena. The *appearance* is of a relationship of action and reaction. Mind acts upon matter, and matter upon mind—as it seems. There is a correlation of mental power with nervous force. How mind produces effects upon the material organism science has not conclusively determined. I have elsewhere given my own impressions,<sup>1</sup> and will not repeat them here. But, at all events, it is no more mysterious than the action and reaction of material forces. How heat is produced by impact and resistance we cannot explain. We are accustomed to say that one force is transformed into another, but this means nothing. We are not able to conceive of any force whatever being destroyed; this is acknowledged. Yet we are no more able to conceive of one force becoming another force, for this implies destruction. The most we can do is to believe that the one which has disappeared still exists, and is related with the force that takes its place under some uniformities

<sup>1</sup> *System of Psychology*, chap. lxxv.

of co-existence and succession. New manifestations of force are all the while appearing in the material world. They produce nothing, and whence they are produced we know not. Their very succession implies their co-existence; their changes postulate their permanence. So mind, we say, is evolved in the course of nature. But it is not produced *by* material forces, but *with* them. Side by side run the phenomena of the two under laws of co-existence. If it be a delusion to believe that mind acts upon matter, it is equally a delusion to suppose that matter acts upon mind. Yet the relationship of the two is of the same sort as the relationship of material forces *inter sese*. On each side there is what we call impact and resistance, initiation and reception, activity and passivity, dynamics and statics. The parallelism is exact and complete. The one set is invariably a reflection of the other.

Hence mind cannot be studied with any profitable result in isolation from matter. Mental progress must be estimated as both determining and being determined by material progress. Mind in the relations of society forms no exception to this rule. Moral and social interests, while at one time and in one particular opposed to material interests, have yet a general correspondence with the latter, and are reciprocally determined by them. The moral development is not a development in absolute opposition to a physical development. The latter is a part of the former, and the former again is a part of the latter, and neither has any proper significance without the other. Material nature is not an enemy relentlessly pitted against us. It is a formative part of all our mental life, and with our mental and social life is governed by precisely the same law of progress. While, therefore, it is irrational to follow nature in the sense of following every natural impulse, which would be to abdicate our crown of intelligence, it is, on the other hand, highly rational to follow nature in the sense of continually adapting ourselves and our life to the general course of nature as we observe it, and judge that it will obtain. There is within us an impulse to activity, toward change or progress, as we are fond of saying. It is in our power practically, however we may explain the fact speculatively, to direct in a measure the course of that activity. We can within limits guide it in such a manner as to thwart, depress, defeat, and crush out the activity itself. We can control it so as to enlarge, prolong, enhance that power to a great extent. In the former course there is a shrinking up of all the vital powers; in the latter there is increased vitality. For the

latter we adapt ourselves to the course of evolution; in the other we throw ourselves against the lines of its movement with the result only of bringing ourselves within the influence of disintegrating forces. This last we cannot avoid in the individual life. It will come sooner or later. But we need not bring on the fate sooner than need be, and thereby have the consciousness that we missed a fulness of life which we might have enjoyed.

The bearing of these remarks upon questions of moral principle and law is as follows: We should recognise that the moral law requires only that there must be a moral law, but never fixes absolutely, and beyond the possibility of change, its precepts. The critic will say that this sounds like Green's phraseology. I have no objection to anyone thinking so, but I should hardly venture to make Green responsible for what I may say, especially as I do not think that this idea is a product of Green's influence. If there is coincidence I am certainly glad. But the thought is this: Rules of conduct always should be means, never ends. Morality is always relative, and the *axiomata media* and *minora* of morals must always be changing. What is moral under one set of circumstances and at one time is not moral under another set and at another time. The chief social good, indeed, will always be the highest happiness of the greatest number, or some equivalent expression; but since what constitutes that happiness continually varies, there must be a perpetual variation of the precepts of conduct as new applications for them arise. That continuous adaptation of organism to environment which is the condition of physical life is represented by a like necessity in the moral and social universe. Rules and laws which once served a good purpose hence become obsolete; and unless we recognise this fact, and replace them by others more suited to present conditions, they are obstacles to morality instead of aids to it. They promote in place of preventing evil.

The advantage of allowing as large a liberty as possible to individual conduct thus appears. For, the individual not the corporate body, is always the first to see and to feel the incongruity of existing law, moral or positive, with changed circumstances. He will inevitably apply his better convictions, and if he is allowed freedom in this application he will inaugurate a better order, and show forth a better law. If, on the contrary, he is repressed by fear of untoward consequences, if he is restrained and hampered at every step by state regulation, or public sentiment, intolerant of novelty, not only will his better idea fail of being carried into

effect, but his activity to produce better ideas and put them into practice will itself be destroyed. If the impulse to unrest which lies in social homogeneity is not allowed to issue in new segregations, in diversities, which themselves make new unities, it will turn into a disintegrating and dissolving force. Wherever in any social community there is an enforced uniformity with repression of individual spontaneity, there are already developing the seeds of death.

But if a maximum of liberty and a minimum of restraint are to characterise the social, and thus the moral, law and its enforcement, the necessity of promoting and, indeed, securing the growth of the altruistic character is again, and still more clearly, evident. For outward restraint we must substitute self-government, always in a greater degree proportionate to the lessening of the other. Unless we do this we shall encourage the following of nature in the sense in which we agreed with Mill in deprecating the maxim; that is, we shall be following the disorganising instead of the organising forces of nature. The latter are as much a part of nature as the former. Human beings have an organic development. The organic forces furnish us the most directly applicable guides to determine how our action must necessarily be limited, and if we desire the preservation and development of an organic social life, we must observe nature's modes of promoting organic physical life. If the individual is under no self-restraint, all that abuse of liberty which has been such a reproach to the name of freedom is likely to ensue. With this comes just as certainly the destruction of the organism as when individual spontaneity and liberty are repressed.

These considerations furnish the two most important general precepts to govern us in the solution of the Problem of Evil on its practical side. For the purpose of securing the elimination of evil, we hence derive two general rules, one negative and the other positive:—

*First: Aim at the minimum of extrinsic restraint and the maximum of liberty for the individual.*

*Second: Aim at the most complete and universal development of the altruistic character.*

The reader will find this to be the leading thought of the present work, the remainder of which will chiefly be devoted to illustrating, defending, and enforcing these precepts as complementary to each other, and as furnishing the practical expression of

that which is permanently imperative in the moral law—a permanence, however, which is, paradoxically, only secured and maintained by change. There was some truth in the old doctrine of the Eleatics that nothing *is*, but all is *becoming*. But though all things may pass away, yet *change* still abideth:—

Iram, indeed, is gone with all his rose,  
And Jamshyd's seven-ringed cup where no one knows ;  
But still a ruby kindles in the vine,  
And many a garden by the water blows.<sup>1</sup>

We thus see how the law of evolution, recognised as governing mental and social, and thus moral, life, furnishes a new and better meaning to the precept *naturam sequi*. In view, however, of the misconception possible, leading to the consequences depicted by Mill, the precept *naturam observare* is, perhaps, the safer expression ; though we must add to it the implication that we observe nature in order to follow its teachings as to the laws which both govern present life and determine progress. If we are wise we will seek lessons from nature to guide our selective activities. We shall see to what extent our powers are restrained, and in what directions they can be freely exercised. It is better to row one's boat when crossing a stream with the current than against it. To kick against the pricks is hard. Wasted labour is profitless. Achievement is always inspiring ; pursuit of the impossible is never satisfactory. A closer study of the course of evolution in the whole natural world with the practical purpose of guiding conduct so as to take advantage of it where we may, and avoid wasting our energies by running counter to it where such action is useless, will do much to accomplish that perfection of the human race which to so many has seemed, in one sense or another, the goal of virtuous effort.

We have already called attention to the manner in which this impulse toward change under the stimulus and guidance of pleasure and pain gives rise through the action of the representative powers to anticipations of the future, and creates ideals of the Good and the Better which furnish ends of volition and activity. In these the painful is eliminated or greatly obscured. To realise such ideals we are for ever impelled. But, although they are of great use in awakening and sustaining activity, the moral vitality being perpetually renewed through them, they are very dangerous unless

<sup>1</sup> *Rubaiyât of Omar Khayyam.*

they are continually chastened, corrected, and reformed by experience. This is only accomplished through science. On the perfection of science rests all progress in amelioration. The constructive powers present new possibilities; the perceptive, associative, reminiscent and discursive, determine the likelihood of the attainment of those possibilities.

We will now proceed to enumerate the special methods to be pursued in the work of the Elimination of Evil.

## CHAPTER XI.

*THE FOUR CHIEF METHODS OF REDUCING EVIL.*

## I. THE CONTROL OF MATERIAL FORCES.

WE have seen that the Problem of Happiness and that of the Elimination of Evil are really one ; and that the attainment of the maximum happiness for the greatest number means the minimising of evil. We have also considered in what sense, and to what degree, the observation of nature is necessary to the reduction of evil. Pursuing still further this thought, the control and modification of material nature appears at once as a primary (though by no means the final) method to be pursued for accomplishing the elimination of evil ; certainly for all that evil which is termed physical, and which causes, no one doubts, a great portion of human suffering. The exercise of intelligence to remove the causes of pain is a necessity of all progress, and as much a part of morality as anything else.

Instinct teaches man in common with other animals to seek food, drink, shelter and other protection from extremes of temperature ; and as civilisation advances, the devices for satisfying all the primary appetites become very complex and elaborate. The greater part of human industry has always been devoted to improving the material conditions of existence ; this is usually the chief work of the individual in life at the present day, the problem which he proposes to solve for himself and those in whom he is interested. Men need little stimulation in this direction, and consequently less need be said about it, although the degree of enterprise exhibited may vary under different circumstances. Utilising material nature in some degree is an inseparable concomitant of life.

Effort to modify the action of forces is only absolutely extinguished in the face of a conviction of impossibility. People do not attempt to prevent rain or drouth, winter cold or summer heat—except it may be by prayer to a power higher than human. They seek to find out the uniformities under which forces work,



that they may have prevision of what is to come and guard themselves accordingly. But within the sphere of what they deem possible of accomplishment activity varies to a remarkable extent. Climatic conditions have much to do with this. The indolence of those who inhabit warm regions contrasts strangely with the untiring energy of many who dwell under northern skies. Again, health and disease everywhere directly stimulate or impair all the vital energies, respectively increasing or diminishing intellectual and volitional exercises. Then, too, the effect of social conditions is powerful now to encourage and now to discourage effort. The conviction of impossibility is almost as strong a deterrent if that impossibility be deemed moral instead of physical. Sometimes it is quite as much so. There have been times when the interests of religion have been deemed to require cessation of efforts to improve material conditions. Very likely in Galileo's day it would have been deemed impious to have invented or applied the electric telegraph system. Many of these social hindrances we shall consider in later chapters. A reference to them is sufficient for the present.

A very interesting essay in the line of the subject of this chapter was the attempt to find an elixir for indefinitely prolonging life. This seemed to the inquiring mind in the early days of scientific interest the most important of all problems. It was, indeed, in their time and with their light, and no one ought to begrudge the labour spent by these ancient alchemists, ridiculous as their expectations may now seem. The futility of the attempt is at any rate no disparagement to the assiduity and earnestness with which they worked. At some time in human history it was inevitable that their question should be raised and answers found, if possible. It seems to be settled that all men must die sooner or later, though a recent writer speculates with some ingenuity on 'The Possibility of Not Dying.'<sup>1</sup> But it would be very presumptuous to say that all the possibilities of prolonging life are exhausted. No one can aver that the limit of knowledge has been reached with regard to conservation and renovation of the human body. Indeed, it seems to me, in view of the enormous progress that has been made in increasing our knowledge and control of molar and molecular forces (other than vital), that the physiological, hygienic, and medical sciences are disproportionately backward. Anatomy is, and for a long time has been, nearly exact and complete. This cer-

<sup>1</sup> H. C. Kirk. New York : Putnams. 1883.

tainly cannot be said of physiology; and, when we consider the empiricism of the healing art, we wonder that at this epoch in human enlightenment so little is scientifically known and verified in regard to the cure of disease. I am not insensible to the difficulties in the way of finding out the agencies at work in bodily disorders, and learning how to counteract them. Nor am I oblivious to the fact that very wonderful discoveries have recently been made as to morbid germs. It is evident that strong and earnest minds are incessantly labouring to improve medical science. But with all this, it certainly is not creditable that human knowledge should be so meagre, and human skill so helpless in the presence of disease, as it is in a large number of instances. There seem to be no thoroughly generalised principles of the action of disintegrating forces within the organism. Equally deficient is the scientific knowledge as to remedies. Physicians apply them by guess-work. Trial and error is still their method in dealing with all but the simplest cases. It is true they educate themselves to make up in kindness, sympathy, and attention what they lack in knowledge; and their ignorance is not the fault of themselves individually, but of their art. Yet this can hardly be satisfactory, even to the doctors. The intelligence of the times demands better things of them. Discoveries are called for at their hands. They must improve the sciences and the arts relating to their profession. They must find, seize, and control for their purposes the life-giving, the life-renewing, the life-preserving forces, as the mechanic, the hydrostatic, the pneumatic, and, above all, the electric forces have been subjugated for industrial uses. There is surely no more noble field of effort, and, it may be added, there is none in which further achievements are more needed.

Perhaps the most remarkable of the triumphs over material nature are the successes achieved in the way of facilitating communication between distant places and people. The railway, the steamship, the telegraph, the telephone, have carried this perfection so far that, with the sole exception of aerial navigation, little apparently remains to be accomplished, unless, indeed, a more economical and better motor than steam be discovered. To a scarcely less marvellous degree have labour-saving inventions of all sorts revolutionised the industrial arts. The objections that have been raised to these last on the score of their depriving workmen of the means of livelihood have been effectually disposed of by economists, and need not be discussed here. Whatever conduces to the

economising of labour, the conservation of vitality, the accomplishment of the greatest results with the least expenditure, is a boon to the human race and favours increased happiness. It is an omen of evil when activity directed toward the control of material forces languishes, or is obstructed.

## II. SECURITY AND JUSTICE.

The social life of mankind begins with the birth of the race. The social factors in the development of every individual from the beginning of his existence are as important as the material conditions of his environment except for the preservation of life itself, and for the latter purpose they are by no means irrelevant considerations. Men are liable to receive at the hands of their fellows not only interferences with their actions in the way of prevention and restraint, but also positive injury. A necessity, then, of all social order is the preservation of security to each individual who belongs to the community; and when this security is violated or destroyed the worst of social evil follows.

But, though some sort of security is obtained in every social organisation, maintained through the machinery of governmental administration, to which is delegated the task of preserving the common order; yet it often happens that this security is imperfect. Its imperfection may arise from the pure malevolence or greed of human beings determined to ignore everyone but self, and to satisfy their own lusts at all hazards. But this is not all. It may arise from a sense of injustice in the administration of law and government. Hence a clear and sound notion of justice, and a faithful dispensing of it by the state authority, is of the highest importance even for security's sake.

A second method to be pursued in the elimination of evil thus appears. The first was characteristically Industrial. This is Political. Governmental administration in all its departments, whatever may be its form, aims to reduce evil by securing to each person the undisturbed pursuit of his own happiness, within the limits which the prevailing ideas as to the scope and authority of government will allow. A common order is preserved and as far as possible perpetuated; and for the purposes of this common order it is necessary that in the governmental administration justice shall prevail. In the words of Mr. Henry Sidgwick, 'the prominent element in Justice, as ordinarily conceived, is a kind of

Equality ; that is, impartiality in the observance or enforcement of certain general rules allotting good or evil to individuals.' <sup>1</sup>

### III. ALTRUISTIC EFFORT.

Much can be done for the prevention and abatement of evil by controlling and applying to beneficent uses the material forces of nature ; and, in the superorganic world, obtaining by social means security to all men in equal measure to put into execution their own purposes, and to work out their own ideals. But even if there were nothing to annul or defeat the effects which might be expected from activities put forth in these two lines, a vast amount of evil would fail to be reached. The maintenance of security and justice is negative. Modifying nature does not affect men's wills directly, but only indirectly. In the transitions from a worse to a better condition, there are always many whom improvement has not yet reached. Even if all are given an equal chance, all are not able equally to profit by their opportunities. There are the weak, the ignorant, the unfortunate, the defeated, who need help, and who, unless aided, will form an aggregate of misery and woe, lowering the level of happiness in the community.

There must be, then, some direct and positive effort for the amelioration of the condition of mankind, in whatever particulars and in whatever instances there appears to be need. This may be either individual or co-operative, the latter of course yielding much more conspicuous results in proportion to the force employed and the field covered.

There never has been an epoch when practical philanthropy has reached a higher degree of perfection than it has at present ; this is a healthy sign. Many devote their whole lives to social work of privately relieving suffering and of encouraging and maintaining associations for humanitarian ends. Practical effort for the amelioration of the condition of people accomplishes the most beneficent results, if wisely directed, both immediately and indirectly. Besides, its reactive influence upon the workers constitutes no mean item of its value. It brings people nearer to each other, breaks down social barriers, destroys the spirit of caste and induces a long toleration—a very necessary preparation for the inauguration of genuine philanthropy, which recognises the universal brother-

<sup>1</sup> *Methods of Ethics*, Book III, chap. v.

hood of man. Such practical effort ought to be encouraged and stimulated in every way.

Without entering upon a full consideration of this very large topic, it will be enough for our present exigencies that we indicate as a third line of work to be pursued in the elimination of evil, what may roughly be termed the Philanthropic.

#### IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER.

From what has been said in the preceding chapters, it is already apparent that to remove evil choices and to prevent their formation is the most transcendent object which can be set before us for attainment in the work of abating what is termed moral evil. The surest way to secure the prevalence of good is that individuals in the community shall *be* good. Less directly, but still essentially, is the same thing of value for the extinguishment of physical evil as well, inasmuch as it is the good disposition that is the most active and effective for the relief of all kinds of human suffering from whatever cause proceeding.

That it is not an easy matter to teach human beings to derive their own pleasure from the happiness of others the history of the world abundantly shows. Character is of slow growth, and is affected by a thousand and one influences. But the results which have been actually attained in the way of modifying individual dispositions are very great, and give promise of still further development. Indeed, the influences at work in furthering this happy progress are now so manifold that we may reasonably expect to see the growth of the altruistic character in the future proceed in a relatively geometrical ratio, if only we can get rid of some of the obstacles and hindrances which proceed from mistaken ideas of what is really best, and from latent, disguised, but still persistent egoism. Herein lies the Problem of Evil as it presents itself to an age which theoretically believes in the altruistic, but knows not where and how to defeat the subtle enemy.

The Educational Method involves not merely instruction, but the actual formation of a capacity for self-control and self-development. This requires the subjection of egoism in the individual and the creation of an altruistic ideal of life for the inspiration and guidance of conduct. It need scarcely be remarked that the education of the family is the foundation of every other, for it is

the earliest practicable, and thus affords the best opportunity for dealing with the fundamental question of character. But since this is not always the best from a variety of causes, which we need not stop to enumerate, and since sometimes indeed it is altogether wanting, the importance of training and discipline in early life is so great that it has come to be regarded (and, I think, justly) as a necessity even for the community's security. John Stuart Mill, while advocating in general the *laissez-faire* system, among the exceptions which he makes points out the need of a state solicitude for education. 'Education, therefore,' says he, 'is one of those things which it is admissible in principle that government should provide for the people.'<sup>1</sup> Although there are serious and fatal objections to the government making a monopoly of education, or imposing any particular system of education involving the support or rejection of particular religious or political theories, the interest of the community that its children should devote their minority, or the greater part of it, to education is paramount to almost every other interest, except an immediate question of life or death. Minors must be under the protection and guardianship of adults in any event; this is a necessity of all life. And the state, in justice to them as well as out of regard for the good of the entire body politic, ought to make the education of the young the subject of positive and comprehensive legislation.

In addition to what may be done in the family and by the state, the work should be supplemented by all the private and non-official agencies which can be brought to bear. The newspaper is the most effective educating instrument of modern times. Cheap standard literature is another valuable help. Associations for the discussion of social questions and for the dissemination of knowledge generally constitute another; institutions for reform another; the pulpit and the church, the lecture platform and the theatre, still another. So long as perfect toleration of the free expression of all opinions on all topics exists, the lines of progress are kept open and the forces of evolution are certain to do their work, but if we impede or abate those forces as they work through the spontaneity of the individual (save only for the necessities of the common freedom), then the counter-forces of disintegration and dissolution must prevail. In the failure to understand or regard this truth lies the secret of the decadence of nations.

<sup>1</sup> *Political Economy*, Book V. chap. xi. 87.

## CHAPTER XII.

*HINDRANCES AND OBSTACLES.*

WE have now instanced four general methods, or classes of methods, of pursuing work for the elimination of evil ; namely, the Industrial Method, working for the Control and Modification of Material Forces ; the Political Method, aiming to establish Security and Justice ; the Philanthropic Method, seeking to remove evil by direct Altruistic Effort ; the Educational Method, which endeavours to effect the Development of Individual Altruistic Character. That these methods of the exercise of activity, or these spheres for activity, as we may be pleased to regard them, are not independent of one another needs no demonstration. Leading to the same end they supplement one another, and interactingly affect each other. The classification is perhaps a rough one, and the classes may not be mutually exclusive ; but they indicate with distinctness four large groups into which the activities for the abolition of evil will naturally be thrown ; and they seem to include all those activities. We shall find, I think, that everyone who is fairly entitled to be called a promoter of the happiness of his kind has performed his task in one of these four lines. The man who improves the plough, or invents the cotton gin, or who facilitates commerce and industry by his output of money, benefits his race in the first method. The statesman, the judge, the administrator, or the soldier—each so far as he acts according to moral standards—labours in the second line. The member of the charity organisation, the contributor to the hospital, the friend of the poor, the sick, the forsaken, follows the third course. The teacher of mankind and the exemplar, who by his own virtues is a burning and a shining light, belong to the fourth class. The artist, so far as his work has a moral value, is also an educator. The cause is always one and the same ; the spheres of labour and the directions of activity are manifold and ever varying.

In the chapter last preceding the paths necessary to be pursued

for increasing the general happiness have been barely indicated. The subject of each one of the subdivisions is of course large enough for a separate treatise. We have now settled upon the Nature of Evil (according to our lights), and determined the general principles which must guide us in seeking its elimination. We have also worked out two General Precepts to govern special and practical effort; and just now have indicated these four special lines of activity or spheres of labour. Inasmuch as it is not proposed to exhibit in this book a complete system of moral science in its details, much less to compass political and social science generally, but rather to present an introduction to all the practical sciences in showing what common principles and precepts determine both their ultimate ends and their methods in their social bearings, our object will now best be furthered by turning our course from positive exposition to negative discussion; for it is important to note what obstructions lie in the way of progress along the lines now disclosed, and what are the hindrances to the application of the precepts we have developed. The way must be cleared before we walk in it. I propose, therefore, to consider some of the present leading hindrances and obstacles to the achievement of the maximum happiness of the greatest number, which I believe is gradually working itself out along the four lines just remarked.

While it must be allowed that there is room for great differences of opinion upon this score, and therefore no claim can be made either that this part of the subject is exhausted in what we may say, or that everyone will agree with the author as to what are the chief obstructions, or, indeed, as to what *are* obstructions at all; nevertheless, on surveying the whole field, I shall venture to present what seem to me to be the chief and most serious impediments in the way of the elimination of evil. To the consideration of these the remainder of this work will substantially be devoted. In the course of the discussions to follow, much will be said in the way of illustration to show how the altruistic work must be prosecuted in the industries, in politics, in philanthropy, and in education.

The first obstruction lies in the attempt to subordinate human conduct in its relations to other human beings to an assumed supernatural system; in other words, to found a system of ethics upon a theology. This essay tends to create what was called in Chapter III. an Artificial Morality. The evil of such attempts, as well as the unscientific character of the positions assumed, it will be our aim to make clear.



The second class of hindrances which seem of sufficient prominence for special consideration arises from the unwarranted elevation of institutions, established as means for the promotion of happiness and as agents by and through which this happiness is to be worked out, to the position of ends in themselves. This brings up the controversy between Authority and Individualism.

The third class of obstacles is allied to the second. It is the product of the notion that because there is more power in combined effort of individuals, therefore social ends are more perfectly realised through the concentration of power in, and its application by, organisations. This is, typically, the question of Socialism.

Finally, we have ever present (and in the preceding hindrances as well) the root of all social evil—the formation and the tenacious retention by individuals of egoistic ideals of life, and consequently of egoistic dispositions. These are always reappearing, under new guises, with every successive advance of altruistic ideas, and constantly need to be exposed and guarded against. An examination of some of the most important phases of this individualistic egoism as it is shown in private life, with some remarks upon the relief against it, will serve also as a summing up of the whole work.



PART III.

THE GREAT THEOLOGICAL SUPERSTITION.

‘ Oh, Thou who didst with pitfall and with gin  
Beset the road I was to wander in,  
Thou wilt not, with Predestined Evil round,  
Enmesh and then impute my fall to Sin !’

*Rubaiyât of Omar Khayyam.*

## CHAPTER XIII.

*THE DOCTRINE OF SIN.*

AT the present day, when enlightened and faithful criticism in the interest of truth is accomplishing so much toward the overthrow of false doctrines, the exposure of ancient errors, and the abolition of the evil which is latent in dogmas supported by authority and not by reason, it is a matter for surprise that no critical re-examination is made of the Doctrine of Sin. Nearly all the important articles of creeds, styled by their promoters 'orthodox' (in what is to others than their supporters an amusing irony), have been canvassed, debated, criticised, and for the most part laid aside as untrue and worthless, or as needing essential modifications. At all events, creeds have been made the subject of close attention and thorough discussion; they have been exposed to reforming influences within the church and to more radical and hostile attacks from without. But the doctrine of sin has not received the criticism it deserves. Its importance in a theological scheme is far greater than appears to have been considered. On examination we shall find it fundamental, and at the basis of the whole scheme of so-called orthodox christian theology. The atonement is of no consequence unless there is need of an atonement in the sinful character of man; a discussion of eternal punishment is idle unless there is guilt to be punished. The redemption by a Christ is wholly dependent upon an assumed state of sin and consequent perdition; and this latter is the central idea in the christian theological system.

I propose, therefore, to undertake an inquiry into both the truth and the morality of the Doctrine of Sin, as held by the 'orthodox' christian church. In such an inquiry our concern will not be primarily with what is sometimes termed the question of Original Sin, which has been discussed so elaborately by Jonathan Edwards, among others. The scope of the present discussion will

be much broader. I intend to raise and, so far as I may be able in outline, to answer the question whether we have any knowledge or information sufficient to form a belief as to the existence of a relation between man and a Supreme Being which admits of sin at all on the part of the former. Moreover, it is my design to examine the bearings of such a doctrine as that of sin upon theoretical and practical morality, and thus upon the happiness of mankind.

In so comprehensive an investigation as this programme would necessitate, if fully carried out in all directions, I could scarcely expect the average reader to accompany me. Dr. Julius Müller, of Halle-Wittenberg, in a work entitled 'The Christian Doctrine of Sin,' to which I shall refer as we proceed, occupies with his subject two large-sized octavo volumes, which are replete with learning; but I doubt very much if anyone but a theological student would have the patience to read the book. I wish to devote attention to the main points to be considered by an intelligent mind as succinctly as is compatible with accuracy and a completeness of outline in the subject. I shall not pretend to exhaust the topic; but I shall endeavour to point out at least where the difficulties lie, where the uncertainties are to be found, and how future thought on this theme ought to be conducted.

At the outset, it is necessary to state and define the Doctrine; and with such a work we will occupy ourselves in this chapter. We shall not find a complete uniformity and harmony among theologians as to what is compassed by and contained in the christian doctrine of sin; and yet without a detailed examination of authorities, I conceive we shall be able to exhibit the essential features of that dogma as maintained by the church generally.

In the first place, we must presuppose a personal God in whose image the immaterial part of man is made, who is possessed of perfect goodness. We must also suppose that God has revealed his will to man. On the part of the human being, we are obliged to assume that he is capable of apprehending and recognising the revealed will of God, and that he, himself, has a will free either to obey or disobey the will of the Divine Being.

The revealed will of God constitutes the moral law. To this law man is subject, thus being under a Divine Government, God being the sovereign who requires complete loyalty, and who is able to, and who will, punish all disobedience.

The moral law is expressed in the Holy Scriptures. Its most

complete and authoritative statement is found in the New Testament, in the words of Jesus Christ :—

‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

‘This is the first and great commandment.

‘And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

‘On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’<sup>1</sup>

This Dr. Müller regards as ‘the ἀνακεφαλαιώσις of all divine commands to men.’<sup>2</sup>

Sin is disobedience to this law. He who completely obeys it is free from sin and morally perfect. He who falls short of such complete obedience is a sinner against God. It will be noticed that we have as the expression of God’s revealed will a double command, but the first portion is paramount and controlling: ‘the first and great commandment.’ As to the relations of these two members to each other, there is a difference of opinion. It is said by some that love to God necessarily carries with it love to man, and that the latter derives life from the former; but that the direction of love to man will not necessarily involve a love to God, and thus obedience to the moral law, however disinterested the altruism may be. On the other hand, the philosophy contained in the story of Abou Ben Adhem is by others strenuously urged. It is held that love to men is love to God, whether the individual is conscious of such an affection or not. I cannot but think that the weight of authority in the church has been in favour of the first of these two constructions, so far as defining the nature of sin is concerned. In the language of Dr. Müller: ‘According to the teachings of Holy Scripture, we are to regard love to God as the proper essence of moral good, as the absolutely, and on its own account, good and necessary; and every other disposition of mind or mode of action only becomes truly moral by its having its root in this.’ And again: ‘What true love to God desires is not at all abstract identity, not a resolution into the Divine Being, but perfect and undisturbed fellowship with God.’<sup>3</sup> So-called orthodoxy will ever insist that there is no obedience to God’s will through works which do not follow a conscious faith in Him.

The essence of sin, then, consists ‘in the estrangement of man

<sup>1</sup> Matthew xxii. 37–39.

<sup>2</sup> *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, Book I. chap. i.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*

from God, in the want of love to Him.' 'But sin is not merely the absence of love to God, but, with this negation of the true relation between man and God, there is in immediate connection the affirmation of a false one. All unbelief in the true God and His holy revelations has ever some superstition for its never-failing reverse side, if it be only the belief in the all-sufficiency of one's own critical and sceptical understanding: the departure of the divine principle of life is immediately connected with a principle in opposition to the divine, according to the declaration of Christ, he who is not for Me is against Me. Man cannot dethrone the true God without putting an idol in His place. What now is this idol?' Dr. Müller, after asking this question, gives us his answer in these words:—'The idol which man in his sin puts in the place of God can be no other than his own self. This individual self and its gratification he makes the highest end of his life. His striving in all the different forms and directions of sin ever has self ultimately in view; the inmost nature of sin, the principle determining and pervading it in all its forms, is selfishness.'<sup>1</sup>

All sin is *Guilt*, and deserving of punishment. The man in whom it is must be regarded as its author. It originates in and emanates from him. 'If we consider the relation of the notion of sin to the nature of man, we may call it a suffering of soul, as that which is foreign and contradictory to its true nature; if we look at the way in which sin originates in real life it is not a suffering, but an *act* of the soul, either immediately an act or grounded in such an act.'<sup>2</sup> This notion of guilt is so important to a proper understanding of the christian doctrine of sin that I shall venture to quote a little more fully from Dr. Müller upon this point. 'Before the juridical forum guilt is only established when the violation of right falls in some way in the sphere of outward phenomena, and it is not sin as such which juridically makes men guilty, but only so far as it invades the judicial arrangements of civil life. On the contrary, before the moral forum everything is found to be guilt which stands in contradiction to the moral law—of course, in existences which are under obligation to the law, and in those conditions of their life in which they are so . . . and, therefore, disturbances and disorders of their inward life which have their ground in the will.

'However, this relation to the will, which is expressed by imputation and guilt, requires still a more exact determination.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* Book I. Subd. II. chap. i.



Indeed, it was not the notion of *peccatum voluntarium* which first of all led us to consider the will as its real seat, but the very commencement of our consideration of sin in general; the notion of the moral law, as the contrast of which sin first of all enters our consciousness, cannot be developed without pointing out its constitutive relation to the will, and therewith representing the will as the essential place of this contrast. But the will may be that, and still, perhaps, only convey an impulse communicated to it by a foreign, superhuman power. That it is not merely the essential place of this contrast in the sphere of human life, but that it is by its self-determining power the author of real evil in human life, which first of all teaches us the consciousness of guilt. This consciousness of guilt makes our personality, in its inmost centre, answerable for our sin. No one can say, when my conscience rejects my sins, it does not therefore reject me; but he, himself, the sinner, is involved indissolubly in his sins, the condemning judgment is directed against himself.

‘But this condemning judgment, which as second moment of the notion of guilt follows from the objective existence of sin under presupposition of a subject to whom it can be imputed, is in itself again a twofold notion. The first is the negating consequence of sin, that the sinner is excluded from fellowship with God. . . . Its peculiar significance lies in this, that this exclusion in consequence of sin attaches itself to the sinner as an abiding unworthiness for fellowship with God. He has committed sin; he is guilty. So long as the desire after God slumbers, the guilt also slumbers; but when the consciousness of guilt awakes, man finds himself separated from God, unworthy of participation in any revelation of God, save in His wrath. This conducts us to the second positive consequence, which attaches to man by virtue of the guilt arising from sin. It is this, that he therewith has fallen under the holy world-order of God, for the due punishment of his crime.’<sup>1</sup>

This existence of guilt is not dependent upon its being recognised in the conscience of the sinner. ‘Guilt is of far greater magnitude and more widely diffused than its consciousness in man.’ The sense may sometimes be awakened very suddenly, and may be roused to a high degree of acuteness of feeling; but, on the other hand, it may be very slight or it may slumber for long periods of time. Dr. Müller thinks that even if there is wanting a complete sense of guilt, there is always the germ of the same.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*

It thus appears that what are ordinarily termed crimes in human affairs are not sins, but are the results of sin. They always indicate a corrupted soul, but are not themselves the sin. The latter lies farther back, and does not consist in any overt act of wickedness or immorality, but in the inward alienation of the soul from God. Where love to God exists man perceives the relations to each other of all human beings as members of a spiritual commonwealth, of which God is the Supreme Law-Giver and Governor. The love which he has for God, therefore, reacts and diffuses itself throughout the sphere of humanity, thus working out an obedience to the second commandment of the moral law. If, however, love to God is wanting, selfishness and self-seeking become ascendant, and the egoistic dispositions fostered are apt to issue in wrongs and injuries to fellowmen. These latter are the *indicia* of sin.

The next point of interest in connection with this doctrine is the extent to which sin is held to prevail. After ascertaining what is meant by sin as set forth by Dr. Müller, the correctness of whose statements, I think, will not be challenged by any of those who style themselves orthodox, we shall not be surprised to find it asserted that sin is absolutely universal. Says Dr. Müller, 'But as to the better and more noble of mankind, the immediate question is only, whether also in their life sin is in any way present. The question here is still purely directed to the mere fact of actual sin, and the answer can only be given us by experience. But he who has devoted any attention to this side of human experience will, although according to the nature of the case a rigid inductive proof cannot be given, nevertheless consider it as an indubitable fact, that every human life which has passed beyond the earliest period of childlike consciousness, is also one which is stained with real sin. To maintain the opposite must ever be regarded as a testimony of inexperience and unacquaintance with life, which one excuses in the youthful enthusiasm for honoured individuals, but not in the maturer consciousness.'<sup>1</sup> And again, 'If a pure spirit came down among us, he would undoubtedly find in the highest degree rejectable the great amount of untruthfulness and petty selfishness, of intolerance and self-exaltation, of uncharitableness and inertness to good, which is to be met with in the lives of even those better and more noble natures. The universal weakness and infirmity of the human race is just its infidelity towards that which it ought to regard as the absolutely Holy. And he who acknow-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* Book IV. chap. i.

ledges the universality of weaknesses and deficiencies acknowledges that no human life can declare itself free from contamination with real sin, with sin condemnable before God.' 'Indeed, we must go still a step further, and maintain that first in the life of those better natures sins which are not committed without a heavier or more definite warning of the conscience are in general oftener to be met with than in the life of others.'<sup>1</sup>

If sin is selfishness, self-seeking, self-striving, it is indeed difficult to see how any individual is free from it. As I understand the doctrine of sin, any, even the least, degree of this egoism is sinful. Dr. Müller remarks, 'It must then stand immovably fixed that it is absolutely blamable to stir even only a finger against the will of God.' In such a view, it was quite natural that the doctrine of original or hereditary sin should arise. This holds that men inherit the sinful disposition, it being a part of their innate character. Jonathan Edwards thought it fully proved 'That mankind are all naturally in such a state as is attended without fail with this consequence or issue, that they universally are the subjects of that guilt and sinfulness which is, in effect, their utter and eternal ruin, being cast wholly out of the favour of God, and subjected to his everlasting wrath and curse.'<sup>2</sup> And 'the proposition laid down being proved, the consequence of it remains to be made out, viz., That the mind of man has a natural tendency or propensity to that event which has been shown universally and infallibly to take place; and that this is a corrupt or depraved propensity.' 'The great depravity of man's nature appears not only in that they universally commit sin who spend any long time in the world; but in that men are naturally so prone to sin that none ever fail of *immediately* transgressing God's law, and so of bringing infinite guilt on themselves and exposing themselves to eternal perdition as soon as they are capable of it.'

Setting aside consideration of the varying shades of belief upon this question of innate depravity, despite their differences, it is held that whenever and however sin begins in the individual, it exists in all and is an absolutely universal fact of human experience. It will hence be seen that the assertion of the importance of this doctrine which I made at the outset is well grounded. For, by reason of this sin all men stand condemned before God to eternal ruin, or at any rate to a punishment of whose duration we have no knowledge. Not only will all men receive punishment, but

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* Book IV. chap. i.

<sup>2</sup> *On Original Sin*, Part I. chap. i.

they are deserving of punishment, they are righteously and properly subject to the wrath of God. He would not be a God of infinite perfection if this were not so. 'This sentence of the law, thus subjecting men for every, even the least, sin, and every minutest branch and latent principle of sin, to so dreadful a punishment is just and righteous, agreeable to truth and the nature of things, or to the natural and proper demerits of sin.' Again, 'The wrath, condemnation and death, which is threatened in the law to all its transgressors is final perdition, the second death, eternal ruin; as is very plain and indeed confessed. And this punishment which the law threatens for every sin is a *just* punishment, being what every sin truly *deserves*; God's law being a righteous law, and the sentence of it a righteous sentence.'<sup>1</sup> The only escape from this perdition is through grace as exhibited in the expiatory atonement of Jesus Christ. By this men are redeemed from the consequences of their sins, saved from their sins, and made heirs to eternal life. Now this whole doctrine of atonement rests upon the assumed truth of the doctrine of sin. If this latter be true, the doctrine of the atonement is not indeed necessarily proved thereby; but this latter dogma cannot be established without allowing the truth of the former. Any theory, therefore, which assigns to Jesus Christ an office other than that of a moral teacher must be dependent upon the truth of the doctrine of sin. I need not say that the so-called orthodox claim for the Nazarene much more than any mere human relations as a teacher and exemplar. According to their beliefs he was sent of God to work out this atonement and expiation of sin of which we have just been speaking.

Without going into more detail, and without discussing minor variances, we are justified in saying that such in its essential features is the doctrine which we have made the subject of our consideration.

<sup>1</sup> Edwards, *op. cit.* Part I. chap. i.

## CHAPTER XIV.

*THE TRUTH OF THE DOCTRINE.*

No person who is sane will deny the existence of evil in the world, or that there is an opposition between good and evil. The problems to be discussed are the nature, the origin, and manner of dealing with evil. It is conceded by all that we have ideals of a better state of things than we see actually about us, and of a higher character than we actually possess. What the bearings of these facts are upon human life and destiny is not so easily determined. The doctrine of sin furnishes one explanation. In order to decide whether it is a correct one or not we are compelled first of all to ascertain what mental capacities we have to receive and obey a divine command. The first and great commandment is, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' We must inquire what is meant by such a mandate, then whether or not it is possible to obey it, and, if possible, what constitutes a compliance.

Assuming that love as commanded in this precept is 'the leaving of self,' the opposite of which is selfishness and self-seeking, we must expect to find in love as strong as that which is here enjoined a well-developed altruistic disposition. We are only able to interpret language by reference to human experience. Words are meaningless except as they mark some experience of sentient beings; and so far as they are applied to sentiments of the mind, they can only have their meaning made plain by psychological analysis. Psychology, as we have in former chapters noted, generalising the well-verified facts of the human mind learned by introspection and observation of others, shows us two prominent classes of dispositions, the egoistic and the altruistic. The former have their roots in and spring from the instincts and ends of self-preservation. They subserve the growth and development of the individual. Were it not generally conceded that the root and indeed the essential fibre of sin is selfishness, it might be necessary

for us to reduce all sins to egoism, and show how the outward exhibition of evil of all kinds proceeds from this source; but by such a concession we are spared this labour. As a matter of fact it would not be difficult to demonstrate that all evil and crime spring from self-seeking and disregard of the good of others. Certainly everything in the way of wrong and injury which aims at acquisition by the perpetrator is obviously egoistic. So also everything which is done under the demand of the individual's desires for the end of consumption. There has been more or less dispute as to the origin of pure malevolence, and indeed as to its existence; but at all events he who inflicts pain with no apparent object does it for his own gratification. The inordinate love of power and of fame is clearly selfish. So it is with every maleficent action and with every malevolent intent; all are egoistic in their nature.

If we identify selfishness with egoism, and if all selfishness be sin, every human being must be in some degree sinful. Nor will it be difficult to demonstrate that sin is inherited by everyone. As we go back to the beginning, however, it will be quite impossible for us to find any first man who was without sin, if he drew the breath of life at all. More than that, it is impossible for us to conceive of any perfect sinless human being, unless existing in different form and under entirely different conditions from man as he exists now, or has existed within historical times; for organic life postulates egoism. In order that there may be a living organism there must be processes tending directly to the preservation of that organism. And if the organic life is guided by a supervening consciousness, that consciousness must have some ruling dispositions towards egoistic ends. If this were not so sentient beings would soon be altogether extinguished. If we have correctly understood the doctrine of sin, there could not have been, therefore, any sinless human being, and we are at least obliged to dismiss the hypothesis of an originally perfect man. Whatever altruism humanity may be capable of, it is certain that the race as constituted must always have had some egoism.

On still further reflection it appears that there can be no altruism without egoism. Of course if an individual by reckless self-disregard throws away his life's opportunities and commits suicide, he thereby diminishes the result of his altruistic accomplishment. In this respect self-conservation may be a means to a greater amount of altruistic work, and self-destruction inimical to altruism

so far as the human race is concerned. But, more than this, it will be found that there is some egoism in every exhibition of altruism. If the inward disposition and not the outward act is the measure by which to determine the presence or absence of love to God, it will be seen that such volitions as exhibit this love are pleasurable and proceed from pleasurable emotions in him who has them. Moreover, the entire sentiment is itself agreeable. It is not only conceded but contended that the presence of this love brings peace, contentment, and happiness, and not merely this, but the richest and fullest happiness. It hence follows that both inward piety and altruistic conduct as issuing from this contain an element of egoistic gratification. We love these things for their own sake, because they satisfy us. Therefore, on the theory of sin promulgated, since all altruism involves egoism, altruism is tainted with sin, and all conduct whatever is sinful.

Thus, in connection with the question of the truth of the doctrine of sin, we note in the first place the presence in every human constitution of selfishness as an essential and necessary element, without which no individual existence is possible. And we observe further that all unselfishness involves some degree of self-gratification; that all this is, so far as we are able to conceive, a necessary condition of human life, without which such life would cease. Such a conclusion does not, however, abolish all difference between selfishness and unselfishness. There is such a thing, to be sure, as unselfish pleasure to be contrasted with selfish pleasure. That pleasure which comes from doing or favouring the will of another is not the same pleasure as that which comes from self-seeking. But the point I wish to make now is that egoism is a necessary part of human mental constitution, and if we hold that all selfishness is in itself evil, we must recognise the fact that man is created with it as an essential part of his constitution. If we do not esteem all selfishness to be evil in itself, then whether or not it is so must depend upon its degree and circumstances. We thus depart from an inward measure to an outward standard. The effects of selfishness must settle this question; I see no third position to assume.

Now, if we suppose that selfishness is in itself sin, there is no escape from the conclusion that God is either the author of evil or is not omnipotent. We find no answer to the queries of Epicurus (Chapter II.). God either created man with sin as a necessary part of his constitution, or some other being incorporated it into man's nature in despite of God. Whichever of these two

hypotheses we accept, clearly man has no responsibility for the existence of sin. He is not to blame for what he cannot help. It is incumbent upon him, we will say, to make the best of his situation, but no blame can in any event be attached to him for the mere existence of sin. Everything of the nature of guilt must be eliminated from consideration. So plainly does this appear that, in order to avert the necessary consequence of destroying the moral character and perfection of the Deity in upholding the doctrine of sin, theologians have had recourse to that psychological theory before referred to (Chapter II.), over which there has been so much discussion and conflict both in philosophy and theology. I allude to the famous doctrine of the Freedom of the Will. This doctrine is, in brief, that every man is created with a free agency of volition, by which it is within his power to choose good or evil; that there is in the will an original source of action, a creative or causative agency. Man, being thus free to choose good or evil, is responsible to God for his choice as an independent author of his wickedness, if he commits any, for which wickedness God is in no wise accountable since He created man free to choose the good. The tenacity with which this doctrine has been held is owing to the fact that it has afforded the only hope of escape from the dilemma above stated. Moreover, it was a subtlety, the meaning or lack of meaning of which was not liable to be readily apprehended, whereas the idea that God is not good, or that He is not omnipotent, appeared to be immediately fatal to the whole system of theology. But as knowledge increased with respect to the nature and method of mental operations, the freedom of the will, as held by theologians, was seen to be self-contradictory and absurd. It amounts to a denial of causation. Psychological science has conclusively shown that the will is determined by the strongest motives. And this conclusion has been confirmed within the church itself by one of its ablest and most acute thinkers. Says Jonathan Edwards, whom I have before quoted on the subject of innate depravity,<sup>1</sup> 'The choice of the mind never departs from that which at the time, and with respect to the direct and immediate objects of decision, appears most agreeable and pleasing, all things considered. If the immediate objects of the will are a man's own actions, then those actions which appear most agreeable to him he wills. If it be now most agreeable to him, all things considered, to walk, then he now wills to walk. If it be now upon

<sup>1</sup> *On the Freedom of the Will*, Part I. sec. 2.



the whole of what at present appears to him most agreeable to speak, then he chooses to speak; if it suits him best to keep silence, then he chooses to keep silence. There is scarcely a plainer and more universal dictate of the sense and experience of mankind than that, when men act voluntarily and do what they please, then they do what suits them best, or what is most agreeable to them. To say that they do what pleases them, but yet not what is agreeable to them, is the same thing as to say they do what they please but do not act their pleasure; and that is to say that they do what they please and yet do not what they please.'

I shall not undertake to go into the free-will controversy, which, as Leslie Stephen<sup>1</sup> says, has been fully 'threshed out.' I am aware it may be thought arrogant to claim that the battle has been absolutely lost to the free-will cause. But I shall unhesitatingly make such a claim, and am assured that it is sustained by all science not suborned to the purposes of theology. There is not anywhere existing an argument for freedom of the will that has not been over and over again fully answered. This is as true of the newer as the older phases of the doctrine. No thorough and careful study of psychology can fail to make the absurdity of this principle fully apparent. If my words are not taken on trust, I shall be obliged to refer the reader to psychological science, or if he is suspicious of science as harbouring a bias against religion, to the very full and elaborate treatise of Jonathan Edwards, who, whatever may be said of him, never can be accused of being an irreligious man, as religion goes among those who would chiefly distrust the soundness of my views or the truth of my assertions. I know of hardly any better discussion of the subject than this of Edwards, and am quite content to recommend his work to any student who is earnest for the discovery of truth.

Discarding the theory of self-determination of the will, if selfishness is in itself sin, it has been implanted in human nature by the Deity or by some Anti-God in opposition to the Deity whom we are commanded to love. Therefore, there can be no moral relation between man and God which admits of anything like what we term guilt for the existence of this characteristic. Man did not put it into his nature; he finds it there: moreover, he is not able to conceive of an organic or personal being who is without it. It is one of the preserving and developing forces of

<sup>1</sup> *Science of Ethics*.

every life—part and parcel of the constitution of every mind. This being so, to charge upon one's self guilt for such a condition of things is simply and literally a mark of insanity. Upon such a view the doctrine of sin is self-contradictory and, indeed, meaningless.

Let us, however, consider another supposition in this connection. It will be said, perhaps, that the selfishness of which sin consists is not the self-preference which is ordinarily shown forth in outward acts as regards others, nor is it the egoism of self-preservation, but an inward preference of self as an object of worship and a hatred of God. Where true love to God exists, then the self-regarding instincts are not indeed destroyed, but they all are made ministers to the controlling influence of a love to God. By this law the peculiar wickedness of selfishness is transformed into a benevolent and beneficial sentiment which issues in altruism toward one's fellows. Without this love to God altruistic dispositions and deeds are not at all redeemed from the curse of sin. Man is not justified by works but by faith. This love to God the natural man is wholly without; his natural state is that of hatred and enmity to God. But, to begin with, if we grant the truth of all such assertions, the query is still pertinent, Who is responsible for the sinful condition? Unless the freedom of the will is conceded, man certainly cannot help his sinfulness if he would. It is part of his constitution inherited from his ancestors. To esteem him guilty of anything under such circumstances is to confound utterly all moral distinctions. He might be imperfect or unfit for God's companionship, but he is not a criminal.

This, however, is not the whole difficulty, insuperable though it be. Let us examine more closely our ideas of love and hatred to God, with the view of ascertaining what these sentiments are in the mental constitution of man. I apprehend that, as applied to relations with God, 'love' and 'hatred' mean the same things that they do in purely human relations. Unless this is the case, I see no use in employing any language whatever to describe relations with the Deity; except, may be, for the favoured few who make a technical science of divinity, and even to them terms can have no meaning except from analogies of human experience. If we coin new words, still they must stand for experiences, and those experiences must have their likenesses which enable general names to be employed to indicate common characters. Now love is an emotion resulting in a sentiment whose constituents are feelings

of preference for some other person. If we accept the definition 'leaving of self' as adequate, there must be some person for whom self is left. If I love a being with all my heart, soul, and mind, I must desire that person's presence, must be eager to devote myself to his service, and generally place his interests before my own. The relations of a happy wedded life exhibit the highest type of love between equals; those of mother and child that of love between a superior and a dependent. In all of these are two elements of satisfaction: one that of companionship, and the other that of helpfulness. It will hardly be disputed that the sentiment in question is the strongest toward a person whom we see or have seen in no very remote period. I may love the Pope, whom I have never seen, and from whom I am separated by a long distance of both land and sea. I can form from what I have heard and read a tolerably definite idea of the Pope's personality; I have seen his picture, I have read accounts of his life and character. I may have a very high admiration for him. If, now, I am required to love him with my whole heart, soul, and mind, does anyone pretend to say that it is possible for me to entertain any such sentiments toward him as toward my own father, whom I see every day, with whom I live, and whose wants and preferences are continually under my observation? There is no companionship either from me to the Pope or from the Pope to me. Nor is there direct personal helpfulness. I can aid his church, praise him to others, do much to advance his empire, to be sure; he may thank me generally, or even specially; but all that cannot evoke or sustain in me a strength of love like that for my father, with whom I am in near and frequent association. Now, 'no man hath seen God at any time.' The only definite idea we have of Him is of a Being of infinite perfections who has a father's love for his creatures. 'Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live.' We create in our imagination a person omnipotent, omniscient, beautiful, and good, but nevertheless a fiction (psychologically speaking) formed by the plastic powers of the mind. We consider ourselves as the dependents of such an absolute Being. The sentiments primarily aroused by thoughts of such a God are those of fear, which become softened into admiration and reverence. There is a power which controls our actions and is superior to our volitions; the manifestations of this power inspire us with awe and dread. By investing this Supreme Being with lovable attributes we are enabled to have in some degree the emotions which belong

to love; but as these are fixed upon an ideal or representative object, they are and must be much fainter than when directed even toward an absent but more definite being like the Pope. All the love there can ever be must be highly representative and ideal so far as love means feeling. There can be no satisfaction of the companionship element of love. No one can be said to have companionship (save in a metaphorical sense) with a creation of the imagination. On the helpfulness side, there may be a disposition to obey God's law if it can be ascertained, but that is all. Men cannot help God. 'God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.' The only way man can carry out God's law is to help his fellows. Love to God then, as action, can only be shown in altruistic dispositions towards others, and, as just noted, so far as feeling can be exhibited, only in an ideal emotion, which can scarcely be called love at all, but which is chiefly admiration, reverence, and fear. If anyone, therefore, urges that I am guilty because I do not love God in the same way and to the same degree that I love my father or mother, he affirms that I am guilty because my nature has been so constituted as to make this an utter impossibility.

Equally true is it that there is a similar natural impossibility for anyone to be in a state of deep enmity against God. I can entertain no hatred against a being of whose personal nature I know nothing except what my imagination pictures; save an ideal hatred I cannot harm him, and I cannot make any attempt to injure him. I may have the unreasoning anger of the savage who beats the inanimate object that hurts him; but all the feeling aroused which savours of malevolence toward God is the spirit of resistance against misfortunes and evils which have happened, are happening, or are threatened. I may be possessed of a malevolent disposition toward my fellow-men, and, so far as I invest God with a definite personality, I may have an emotion of anger toward Him, but it is a very faint copy of the sentiment I have toward a human being. It is a sentiment directed towards an ideal being with whom I have no direct personal relations. I may disapprove of Him, disbelieve in Him; but anything like positive hatred is impossible. Man's hurtful dispositions are toward other men; he can form no disposition to hurt God; and whatever malevolence

he has is occasional, and then only toward an ideal object. If justice is justice, there is no guilt in such feeling.

The conclusion to which these remarks point is that when we eliminate the egoistic and altruistic sentiments as directed to human beings from the mental constitution, we shall have left both for love and for hatred to God only ideal emotions of extreme tenuity. Both this love and this hatred are only representations of emotion aroused by experiences with other human beings. Moreover we shall then be able to find no volitional dispositions, because there will be no definite ends toward which volition can move. Hence, if love to God or hatred of Him is to enter into problems of conduct or into our judgment of the moral value of actions, it must be measured entirely by man's actions and dispositions toward his fellows. It is only thus that we can get hold of anything to which we can attach ideas of praise or blame. A person's egoism determines his sinfulness. If, ethically speaking, he is malevolent, so far forth is he sinful; and in the degree that his dispositions are altruistic is his character a righteous one. But if this be so, the universality of sin is no longer to be admitted; for however selfish men have been, there have occurred in all times instances of predominantly altruistic natures, and at the present they are not uncommon. If sin is to be determined and measured by ethical laws, then all the considerations of justice in human affairs must control, and we can predicate of God's government no other principles than those which belong to human government. Sin is injury and wrong to one's fellows, and nothing more. Evil thought is incipient sin; evil acts constitute overt sin. Not all selfishness is sin, but only that which in its purposes and results is maleficent.

But even upon such conclusions we do not escape the difficulty that God is the author of evil, and this destroys the guilt of sin. For all of man's inhumanity to man springs from natural propensities, and can be traced directly to the predatory appetites. They are elicited and thrown into exercise by surrounding circumstances. Both these propensities and these circumstances occur in the order of nature, of which God is the cause. It may be necessary in the social organism to restrain individual action and maintain some sort of government which involves punishment of transgression. Positive law will thus arise, and, back of that, moral law which creates in each individual an imperative of duty. Self-control, self-government, and self-direction, will thus assert themselves in

each mind; but if ever voluntary control is insufficient to keep down selfishness, it is only in obedience to natural laws which God has presumably made. Man, therefore, is not guilty of any offence against God if his acts are in direct consequence of God's own laws. He may be imperfect in the light of ideals of attainment which are set before him, but he deserves no punishment which is not reformatory in its character.

A claim will doubtless be made that love to God is evinced in a dependence upon Him, which allows a personal communion of a spiritual nature through His Holy Spirit. It will be said that this communion is the spiritual life of man, and that when God is consciously repelled by man the spiritual influence departs, and the life is merely a carnal or sinful life. The Rev. Timothy Dwight thus expounds from various Scripture texts the difference between what is the issue of the flesh and the offspring of the Spirit: 'The word flesh is customarily used in the Scriptures to denote the native character of man. In this sense the carnal or fleshly mind is declared by St. Paul to be enmity against God, not subject to His law, neither indeed capable of being subject to it. In the same sense, the same apostle says: "In me, that is, in my flesh," or natural character, "dwelleth no good thing."

'A contrast is studiously run between that which proceeds from the Spirit and that which proceeds from the flesh—or, to use the words of our Saviour in the passage above quoted, between that which is flesh and that which is Spirit—in several passages of Scripture. "To be carnally minded," says St. Paul, "is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom. viii. 6). In the original, "The minding of the flesh is death; but the minding of the Spirit is life and peace." And again (Gal. v. 19–23): "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."'<sup>1</sup>

Further expounding the nature of regeneration, Dr. Dwight says:<sup>2</sup> 'This change of heart consists in a relish for spiritual

<sup>1</sup> Dwight's *Theology*, Ser. lxxii. (vol. ii.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Ser. lxxiv.

objects communicated to it by the power of the Holy Ghost. By spiritual objects I intend the Creator, the Redeemer, the Sanctifier, Heaven, Angels, the word and the worship of God, virtuous men, virtuous affections, virtuous conduct, and all the kinds of enjoyment found in the contemplation of these objects, the exercise of these affections, and the practice of this conduct. The existence of these objects every man admits; and every man at all conversant with human life must admit that a part of mankind profess to relish them and to find in them real and sincere pleasure. . . . I will only add on this subject that the relish for spiritual objects is that which in the Scriptures is called a new heart, a right spirit, an honest and good heart, a spiritual mind, and denoted by several other names of a similar import. Thus, a good man out of the good treasure of his heart is said to bring forth good things. Thus, also, they who received the seed in good ground, as exhibited in the parable of the sower, are said to be such as in an honest and good heart, having received the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience. In these and the like instances the heart is exhibited as the source of all virtuous volitions, desires, and conduct. This relish for spiritual objects is, I apprehend, this very source of these interesting things.'

The above quotations show what is meant by spirituality as opposed to sinfulness or carnality. Carnal pleasures are sexual pleasures unrestrained (adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness); worship of false gods (idolatry, witchcraft); delights of the festive board (drunkenness, revellings); predatory, malevolent enjoyments (witchcraft, hatred, variance, seditions, murders, envyings, &c., &c.), and the like. Spiritual pleasures are the more representative sexual joys (love), restrained and temperate enjoyments of appetitive cravings (temperance), and very largely social and altruistic pleasures embraced in the general description of love to God and to one's neighbour, including also a relish for the society of good men, for doing good deeds, for contemplating the pleasures of Heaven. Still further epitomising roughly, we may say that carnal pleasures are presentative, egoistic, and malevolent; spiritual pleasures representative, altruistic, benevolent.

As a requisite to obtaining spiritual pleasures temperance is prominent; for without it the carnal pleasures will have full sway. The pleasures of virtuous action are also of no mean account. The altruistic pleasures referred to in the foregoing exposition, like all other altruistic pleasures, are in their very nature social.

*Friendship, love, benevolence*, and their attendants, make up the total.

If President Dwight gives correctly the characteristics of spirituality, it will not be difficult for us to see that the foundation pleasure of spirituality is that of society. By the latter pleasure we are able to explain friendship, love, and benevolence, adding to love in some cases the ingredient of sexuality. While, then, it might be admitted without hesitation that this pleasure is at the root of the relish for the society of good men and the approval of good actions of others, I doubt not it will seem to some that the love for God's society—'the Creator, the Redeemer, the Sanctifier'—and the desire for His approval, is something different in kind, and not traceable to the primary natural pleasures. And yet one great effort of the propagators of Christianity has been to establish the belief in a *personal* God, a God with a mind and a heart, and the ascriptions of personal attributes and qualities to Him have no force or meaning except by analogy to and comparison with the human personality. Man is said to be created in the image of God. Moreover, God is represented as a Father, a kind and loving parent; and the highest type of love we can have for God, we are told, is the love of a child for its parent. In God there is the very perfection of society, and the difference between the pleasure of God's approval and His social favour and that of a parent is only that the former is much greater in degree than the latter; and the sources of the former pleasure are in no wise different in kind from those of the latter.

The joy in spiritual objects—the contemplation, worship, and love of God, the joy of Heaven, Angels, virtuous men, virtuous affections, virtuous conduct; love, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, trust—the pleasures of spirituality, are hence founded in altruism, which springs, as psychological study shows, from the primary pleasures of society and sexuality. But I think there is another important element in spirituality which President Dwight does not develop prominently enough. This is supplied in a work '*On Religious Affections*,' by Jonathan Edwards,<sup>1</sup> in a section bearing the following title: 'The first objective ground of gracious affections is the transcendently excellent and amiable nature of divine things, as they are in themselves; and not any conceived relation they bear to self or self-interest.' In the course of the section occurs this passage, which illustrates what

<sup>1</sup> Part III. sec. 2.



I have in mind. 'And as it is with the love of the saints, so it is with their joy and spiritual delight: the first foundation of it is not any consideration of their interest in divine things; but it primarily consists in the sweet entertainment their minds have in the contemplation of the divine and holy beauty of these things as they are in themselves.' By virtue of the redintegrating processes, repetition of action tends to produce still further repetition, until what was originally done for a specific end is done from the pleasure of doing, independently of any thought of an end for which the action is performed. A man goes to his daily business to obtain his livelihood; but, after a time, his pleasure is transferred to the activity itself; he does his work because he likes to work, and unless he is thus occupied he is unhappy, even though he may have acquired a competence. A student seeks to learn because he must learn in order to make his way in the world; but by-and-bye, sometimes very early, he comes to love knowledge for its own sake, irrespective of any advantage it is to bring. He does not think of the good it is to do him; he takes delight in the learning and in knowing. An industrious, provident man, in like manner, becomes a miser and loves his wealth for its own sake so greatly that he will not part with enough of it to feed and clothe himself.

This state of mind occurs only after repetition. Inheritance undoubtedly creates a predisposition, but repetition develops. The pleasure is one of activity for its own sake, and the direction in which the activity is exerted habit determines.

Applying these remarks to the subject before us, it should be observed that the peculiarity just commented upon is doubtless a characteristic of 'spirituality.' As related to conduct, it is a concomitant of altruism. The ego-altruistic pleasures are those into which the pleasures of others enter with the thought present of the advantage they bring to self. But the pure altruistic pleasures are those which are satisfied with the pleasure of others for its own sake. Such are exactly what are termed the pure spiritual pleasures. They are taken in virtuous conduct, virtuous society, virtuous disposition, for its own sake, without the conscious thought of the benefit to accrue to self. It is painful to act in a manner not virtuous, to be with vicious persons, and to have vicious determinations of the will. Similarly, the spiritual mind loves to represent those experiences in which virtuous action and virtuous companionship form the prevailing part. It loves to

dwell upon all the associations of virtue and virtuous society, and to construct by the plastic power of association modifications and enlargements of experience. So, for their own sake, 'spiritual objects' are loved, dwelt upon, cherished; and virtuous conduct, with all its attendants, is held of value for itself alone, and not consciously for any other reward.

It should be further observed that a close relationship between spiritual and æsthetic pleasures suggests itself here, arising from a coincidence between one use of the term *spiritual* and the proper meaning of *ethical*. This relationship is that subsisting between æsthetic and ethical emotions. Æsthetic pleasures as compared with spiritual are more notably pleasures of contemplation and reflection, while the latter are more distinguishably pleasures of volition and action. Both are alike in being concerned with objects which are not ministering directly to bodily necessities of self, and in objects whose enjoyments are not restricted to a single mind. But further than this the parallel does not hold. The absence of disagreeable accompaniments in an object is its most decided qualification for giving æsthetic pleasure; the experience must be one free from the disagreeable: it is enough that the object be beautiful. But in order to secure a spiritual pleasure the object must bear some relation to the happiness of others, and the experience must be one in which altruistic thoughts and altruistic pleasures are uppermost. The contemplation of a beautiful statue gives us an æsthetic delight; the relieving of the necessities of the poor a spiritual (or ethical) delight. Listening to a fine musical entertainment occasions æsthetic pleasure; the thought that the money we pay for the enjoyment goes for charitable uses, deepens the pleasure and superadds the spiritual element. In a word, in the æsthetic the absence of the disagreeable is the characteristic factor; in the spiritual, the altruism.

It is evident that the æsthetic and the spiritual are intermingled with each other. God and Heaven are æsthetic objects, and they may be regarded from an æsthetic point of view. They are beautiful; pain and evil are disassociated from them. But they are also pre-eminently altruistic objects—God as the Father of all mankind, the benevolent Giver of happiness to His creatures and the Reliever of woe; Heaven as the place whence evil is banished, where pain is unknown, and where the best and most virtuous dwell. On the other hand, virtuous character and conduct have their æsthetic aspects; they have their beauty as well as their goodness. Even

objects peculiarly within the domain of the æsthetic give spiritual pleasures. The picture of the Virgin, of Christ, or of a saint may affect us either as a noble work of art or by eliciting the associations of goodness, beneficence, grace, and charity connected with the persons represented. Many popular ballads please by the melody less than by the noble sentiment expressed. The music of a piece gives æsthetic delight, the *words* usually appeal to the spiritual emotions. It is not unfrequently the case that the æsthetic in religion crowds out and nearly eliminates the spiritual, or ethical, so that men are in reality worshippers of the beautiful and the agreeable, without regarding the happiness of their neighbour, or at any rate placing that of less importance in the scale of their regards. But though the æsthetic and the spiritual, or ethical, are thus interfused they are of a distinct character. All pleasures may become æsthetic, both the egoistic and the altruistic. From every primary pleasure may be developed æsthetic pleasures. On the contrary, only the altruistic pleasures furnish any ground for the spiritual, and these are limited to society and sexuality.

From these considerations it is evident that so-called 'spirituality' is a natural development from natural pleasures—pleasures which are just as natural as any egoistic pleasures. In the history of the human race, men have been more 'carnal' than 'spiritual' for the most part, as the predatory appetites have controlled and overslaughed the social; and at the present time the majority of men are more carnal than spiritual; but there is no time of which we have record when there were no social appetites, and no time when benevolence and love have been wholly absent. The preservation and multiplication of the race is evidence of this fact, for, without allowing the pleasure of society, there is no way to make possible the gratification of the sexual appetite. As civilisation advances, the altruistic and representative pleasures gain ground, until their value is considered, and by many, far greater than that of the more presentative and egoistic pleasures. In the more highly cultivated individuals the representative pleasures are the most esteemed, and in not a few the altruistic surpass the egoistic. A study of the records of the past will reveal at any epoch which may be selected evidences of an egoistic and an altruistic spirit, though generally speaking the farther back we go the greater the preponderance of the egoistic. Again, it should be noted that the spiritual pleasures, though antagonistic to some carnal pleasures, are closely allied with others. Among the primary pleasures, there

is an affiliation between the sexual and social in opposition to the predatory. The pleasures of sexuality, therefore, in connection with the social, are the matrix out of which the spiritual pleasures grow.

Since the human mind has an aptitude for both carnal and spiritual pleasures, and the former have been more originally prevalent, and the latter in their strength only a development characteristic of a more complex mental organisation, it appears that the latter have for the most part to be educated in order to have a controlling power. Some constitutions are better adapted to enjoy them than others. When there is a strong animal organisation and powerful motives are brought to bear (eternal salvation, for instance,) to induce the man to subdue the lusts of the flesh and find his greatest pleasures in spiritual things, then comes a struggle. His spirituality is cultivated only at the expense of poignant self-denial. He has to crucify the flesh. With spiritual enjoyments, thus are connected a large class of pains. Indeed, the person does not properly become spiritually minded till he ceases to require an effort to dwell on spiritual things. Some persons' lives in this way have been made a perpetual contest. Often men absorbed in carnal pleasures are awakened to the appreciation of higher and better delights by the thoughts of advantages to accrue to them, either from positive benefits in the way of position, influence, health, wealth, or power, or in escaping evils. If they persevere in attempting to change their habits, after a while their 'relish for spiritual objects' becomes purely altruistic, and then results delight in those objects in and for themselves. A proper early education, continued through childhood and youth, will accomplish, in all cases where there is not inherited a strong predatory constitution, the fixing of the mind's 'relish' for spiritual things so firmly as to establish a controlling preference for spiritual pleasures, powerful enough to subdue the baser and more destructive appetites.

Undoubtedly, for a long time, the most cogent motive compelling attention to spiritual things was one which took its rise in ignorance and superstition. The terror of the wrath of an offended God, with all the paraphernalia of future torment, drove men to dwell upon the representative, the altruistic, and the spiritual. Then the excesses of riotous living, and the ailments and shortening of life consequent thereon were made apparent as knowledge grew. The danger to one's own life when a spirit of hatred and slaughter became rife was pointed out. Enlightened self-interest

taught men that altruism is better than unrestrained egoism. The blessings of being loved taught people to love. All these motives are still of force in varying degrees, one appealing with the most force to one constitution, another to another.

The importance of a correct understanding of the nature and sources of this 'regenerated' or 'spiritual' life must be my excuse for the length of consideration which I have allowed to it. Of course, I am not able to give within the limits of this treatise a whole psychology. But perhaps I may be permitted to express an opinion as to what psychological science teaches, and as to what a careful study of mental phenomena reveals. In my judgment, after giving the most serious attention to the subject for twenty years, all that there is in the feeling of a 'relish for spiritual objects' is a representation of primary feelings entirely natural, arising in obedience to natural laws of the development of mind. I do not say that it is not a communion with God; but I do affirm that, at all events, it is nothing different in kind from the altruistic spirit, in whatever form we see it exhibited, and from the æsthetic blended with it. And if there be a divine influence which we feel in the best moments of our lives, it is not in any sense a personal communication, as two human beings communicate with each other in the spoken or the written word. It is at most an influence, a force, a power emanating perhaps from a person, but not being itself a direct, certain, and recognisable communication from the Divine Being.

Some writers have endeavoured to get over the very obvious difficulties in the way of the claim that the religious emotions indicated the immediate presence of a Divine Person, by inventing a Reason as an assumed faculty for seeing God and knowing him as one human being knows another. They occupy the strongest possible ground in support of supernaturalism if they can prove the existence of this Reason as a fact of mental life. I have elsewhere examined this claim with some care,<sup>1</sup> convinced of the importance of its bearings, and have endeavoured to show its utter groundlessness. Our knowledge of God is wholly inferential and representative, not intuitive or immediate. Hence, if we have any communion with God, it is only the communion we have with an absent, unseen person, who, operating through nature and natural laws, is able to develop in man this 'relish for spiritual objects,' to appear as a factor of human progress in the course of evolution

<sup>1</sup> *System of Psychology*, chap. lvii.

It is susceptible of cultivation, no doubt; but it belongs to and is nothing else than that altruistic and æsthetic development which has been modifying human nature in natural modes from the beginning of history.

Thus, whether we consider the love to God of 'the first and great commandment' to be absence of selfishness in human relations, abnegation of self-worship in favour of divine worship, or a state of spiritual regeneration as opposed to the natural, the carnal state—in all these cases we are forced to postulate the Deity as the Author of sin, or as not omnipotent. This destroys all that is essential to the idea of sin. Moreover, if sin be selfishness in the relations of the individual to his environment, then sin is absolutely necessary to the constitution and existence of every human being. This must have been so from the beginning, and any sinless, perfect human life is an utter impossibility. Sin is the law of organic preservation and growth. Not even love to God can be maintained, save by the aid of sin, and cannot be conceived without postulating it. This is also fatal to the doctrine. Again, if the requisite love to God is worship of God, which consists in an emotional state of strong and controlling power surpassing any love to human individuals, in the absence of which sin consists, this also is an impossibility because the human mind is not so constituted as to admit of it. This also militates unanswerably against the doctrine of sin. Further, if the love to God, the lack of which is sin, lies in a state of regeneration wherein the person converted loves the things of God, it appears upon examination of these things, as they are explained by theologians, that they consist in altruistic feeling and volition, or else in objects of æsthetic contemplation—in other words, that the spiritual love is a natural development of altruistic and æsthetic interests, the former being characteristic. The sum and substance of these conclusions is that the love to God, without which there is always sin, is, always was, and ever must be, an impossibility to mankind—indeed, inconceivable by man; or its explanation, its test, and its measure must be found in the relations of men to their fellows: their feelings, their dispositions, their actions to their own kind. While, in any and all events wherever sin may be and in whatever it may consist, there is still the necessary attribution to God of the ultimate responsibility for sin, unless He be of limited power. Certainly there is no guilt of man as related to a Supernatural Being.

It seems, therefore, that those who regard the words of Jesus enjoining love to God and to one's neighbour as 'the ἀνακεφαλαιώσις of all divine commands to men,' can only stand upon the ground that the second member of the double precept is intended to indicate both the manner and the measure of the love to God which the 'first and great commandment' requires. The only way we can love God with all the heart, soul, and mind is to love our neighbour as ourself. And if we do obey the second commandment, so far forth are we fulfilling the first. But this second command is nothing more than the ethical rule of conduct. Religion is hence thrown back upon science, and its practical application is measured and governed by scientific laws and rules. To be moral is to be religious so far as conduct is related to religion, and to the degree that a man is immoral is he also irreligious. If, however, this proposition be accepted, it is evident that the doctrine of sin as herein enunciated is not true. Offences against the moral law are no greater against God than they are against men. Upon religious grounds, he who sins against his fellows may sin against God; but the measure of his sin is the harm done or intended, and this is entirely capable of being over-balanced, expiated, and atoned for by good. There must be a reasonable estimate of character; a man's virtues must be placed to his credit as against his vices. And for the latter, he receives punishment at the hands of his fellows in one way or another, either by experiencing those positive penalties which society is obliged to affix to criminal action, or by social losses and deprivations consequent upon his ill-conduct. If wrong-doing be sin against God, it must be judged by its human relations. Some sins are venial, some are heinous; some are mere imperfections, others are positive villanies; some are misdemeanours, others are crimes; some are omissions, others are sins of commission. But whatever they may be, they are no greater toward God than they are to human society. And if a man is sufficiently humane to be entitled to the recognition, society, and favour of his fellows, he is justly entitled to at least the same consideration under God's government. On ordinary principles of justice he is entitled to more favour from God, since God occupies to him the relation of a Father who watches over him and cares for him, and also the relation of Author of his being, his mind, his environment, and his disposition, who has implanted within him tendencies which, in their working out, have developed his untoward actions.

If such, then, be the correct view of the meaning of 'love to God,' the untruth of the doctrine of sin appears in the following particulars :—

1. Sin at its worst is not a direct offence, but only an indirect offence against God, the direct injury being against man, through which alone God is disobeyed.

2. There is no love or hatred of God in the same degree that there is toward man ; this love or hatred is highly ideal. Man is not naturally at enmity with God.

3. Sin is not universal ; but so far as it exists, exists in varying degrees, the measure of sin being malevolence towards one's fellows.

4. The heinousness of sin in itself is greatly lessened. Man is not guilty towards God of anything at the very furthest that he is not guilty of toward man ; and whatever sins he may commit should be offset by his virtues, and extinguished by them. Man is not, therefore, under general condemnation, which would be the grossest kind of injustice.

5. Selfishness is not necessarily sin, but may be, and to a certain extent is, obedience to God's law.

6. Ground is laid for the argument that sin is imperfection, which is punished only in the operation of natural laws, and neither deserves nor will receive any further punishment.

I have thus far been considering the truth of the doctrine of sin on the supposition that the moral law of Scripture as summed up in the two great commandments is a direct revelation from God and is of binding force and authority over and above the authority of general ethical law. As gauged by this standard, the doctrine of sin is seen to be untrue upon a fair interpretation put upon the words of Jesus in accordance with general experience. The difficulties in the way of the so-called orthodox construction of the commands are not to be overcome. In order to substantiate their position the self-styled orthodox appeal to psychology—for them a most fatal step ; for psychology exposes the baselessness of their pretensions, and removes the very ground upon which they stand. The doctrine is of no value without the hypothesis of the freedom of the will, and even then it is irreconcilable with any ideas of justice in connection with omnipotence which are not totally opposed to justice as understood in all human relations. Any theology which makes God the creator and sustainer of all conscious existence is contradictory to any theory of man being guilty in the eye of God for acts which



are the outcome of innate dispositions. The sense of guilt is necessary and desirable for a human ethical system; but when we get beyond this, it is as useless as it is meaningless and absurd.

It must not be overlooked that a large portion of the human race, and not merely of the common and ignorant, but also of the select and intelligent, do not accept the Bible scriptures as a direct revelation from God, or as carrying with them any authority other than they are entitled to carry upon ethical principles applied to their subject-matter to determine its value. To all such, the untruth of the doctrine of sin is palpable and gross. No argument is needed to establish its insufficiency. It is a fiction, not only absurd but immoral. It is very easy to assail the motives of such people, to impugn their good faith, to decry their intelligence. But at all events the fact remains, and we must take note of it. If on the grounds of the believer the doctrine is found untrue, much more, when judged by the standards of the unbeliever, it is without merit and wholly unworthy of the place that has been claimed for it as a truth affecting the interests of mankind.

It cannot be denied that there are in the Bible many passages which seem to substantiate the view with respect to the existence, nature, and consequences of sin that are embodied in the foregoing statements of the doctrine. They are identified with those ideas of God which represent Him as a cruel and bloodthirsty despot, before whom all the world stands condemned, and it is an act of beatitude and grace if He spares anyone at all. An argument can be made out from Scripture texts which appears to justify these theological dogmas about man's depravity and God's condemnation. But the difficulty is they are not substantiated by those texts to which Christian theology gives pre-eminence as furnishing the *ἀνακεφαλαιώσεις* of all divine commands to men. As measured by the latter, the force of the argument drawn from the former is destroyed; for although the former denounce men as universally sinful and worthy of condemnation—in fact, as already under God's wrath—the latter, being taken as authoritative, furnish upon a fair interpretation an explanation of sin which demonstrates that sin varies in degree, that it arises in accordance with natural laws, that depravity is not total, and that sin is not a direct offence against God, but only an injury to man, which ought to be balanced by the good which an individual may do his fellows.

In any event, conceding everything possible to the supporters of the doctrine of sin, there is, at the very least that may be

claimed against it enough uncertainty, confusion, contradiction, want of proof and authority about this dogma to make even the most deeply religious, the most staunch in their belief in a personal God, whose revelation is the Bible, very seriously doubt whether there is any truth in such a doctrine, or, if there be truth, whether it is not overslaughed by a vast mass of error. Such being the case, an inquiry into the bearings of this doctrine of sin upon human morals becomes very pertinent; and to this we will now for a while address ourselves.

## CHAPTER XV.

*THE MORALITY OF THE DOCTRINE.*

A DOCTRINE is moral or immoral only as it influences conduct, or is esteemed to influence conduct. A theoretical principle expressing a scientific truth, knowledge, as such, has not the quality of morality. There is no ethical character in the axioms of geometry, the law of gravitation, the persistence of force, or the law of evolution. It is only when principles are used as precepts and made rules of conduct that the question of morality comes in, since the sphere of ethics is wholly that of conduct as affecting individual and social welfare.

Actions in their consequences to human beings, as well as volitions, which are incipient actions, may be classified according to the following scheme, which I quote from the 'Data of Ethics,' by Herbert Spencer,<sup>1</sup> and which, so far as the classification is concerned, I believe does not propound anything which will not be generally conceded. I simply make the quotation because the statement therein contained is succinct, not because there is anything novel in it, nor yet because I hope to smuggle into the discussion any particular theory of ethics. 'There is a class of actions directed to personal ends which are to be judged in their relations to personal well-being, considered apart from the well-being of others; though they secondarily affect fellow-men, these primarily affect the agent himself, and must be classed as intrinsically right or wrong according to their beneficial or detrimental effects on him. There are actions of another class which affect fellow-men immediately and remotely, and which, though their results to self are not to be ignored, must be judged as good or bad mainly by their results to others. Actions of this last class fall into two groups. Those of the one group achieve ends in ways that do or do not unduly interfere with the pursuit of ends by others—actions which, because of this difference, we call

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xvi.

respectively unjust or just. Those of the other group are a kind which influence the states of others without directly interfering with the relations between their labours and the results, in one way or the other—actions which we speak of as beneficent or maleficent. And the conduct which we regard as beneficent is itself sub-divisible, according as it shows us a self-repression to avoid giving pain, or an expenditure of effort to give pleasure—negative beneficence and positive beneficence.’

As just indicated, the moral influence of a doctrine is not confined to actions. It relates also to volitions, and through them to dispositions, and thus to character, which, when organised, determines actions. It is in this way that a man’s beliefs are of direct consequence to him. They modify his governing dispositions, extend his activity in some directions and repress it in others; they enlarge his sympathies for one class of persons or things, and increase his antipathies for everything opposed. They very materially shape his destiny for him; and as the character and achievements of individuals are moulded society generally is affected. It is, therefore, not doctrine as such which is to be reprobated, but only bad doctrine. We could not get rid of generalisations in the form of theories and doctrines, if we would. Mankind will always have creeds and platforms. Intelligence requires this. Our business, then, is not to condemn all creeds, but only those that are untrue and of evil influence.

A doctrine which is not true is always, and necessarily, deleterious to humanity, in the long run, as far as its untruth affects dispositions or actions. And since all doctrines are liable to do this latter in greater or less degree, it is highly desirable that truth should be obtained and preserved and that falsehood should perish. The church has often claimed this, though often practically denying the force of the statement when it militated against church interests. Malebranche, who saw all things in God, begins his treatise on ‘The Search after Truth’ with these significant words: ‘Error is the universal cause of the misery of mankind.’ Samuel Bailey, who quotes Malebranche, begins his own essay on ‘The Pursuit of Truth’ with the correlative expression: ‘Truth, by which term is implied accuracy of knowledge and of inference, is necessarily conducive to the happiness of the race.’ If anyone fails to appreciate the importance to humanity of truth in all things which are the objects of knowledge at all, I would commend to his careful reading this essay of Samuel

Bailey, the one relating to the formation and publication of opinions. Every person in the least inclined to intolerance should study diligently these treatises; and in these times of general enlightenment and toleration it will be very strange if he does not come to Bishop Berkeley's conclusion that 'utility and truth are not to be divided.'

The Doctrine of Sin may be epitomised, for the purpose of showing its relations to conduct, in two divisions:—

1. All mankind are guilty, and are justly deserving of the eternal punishment to which God has condemned them for their guilt.

2. Not by their works, but by faith in the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ they may be saved from the consequences of their sins; otherwise their lot is just damnation.

Any person who has not been accustomed to accept church doctrine implicitly, must first be impressed by the perversion of the idea of justice which this doctrine indicates, and which we adverted to in the previous chapter. Some further remarks are demanded here. This perversion is gross and shocking. The whole human race is put under the ban of an assumed just wrath of God for things which the individuals did not commit themselves at all, or, if they did, they committed the acts by virtue of a natural proneness which they could not help! Moreover, there is no distinction in degree of sin, so far as effecting any exculpation is concerned. For any, 'even the least sin,' and 'every minutest branch and latent principle of sin,' damnation for ever, 'so dreadful a punishment,' is 'just and righteous.' We are forced to take the meaning of words from their ordinary, current, and accepted use. We cannot say that justice in divine government means anything different from justice in human government. In the former we acknowledge ourselves to be under a *régime* controlled by an absolute Governor, whose subjects we are, and who is supposed to realise our highest ideal of goodness, reason, and justice. We can have no measure for God's justice, except that ideal which is derived from man's relations. Our highest conception of what would be just in a human system is all we can assign to the Supreme polity. Now, it need not be said that in human affairs such justice as is predicated of the Almighty's administration would not be tolerated for an instant in any state where the rights of individuals are respected, and not a great while in any other state. The condemnation of a whole race of intelligent

beings to torture without end because of the disobedience of one pair creating a transmitted perversion of will, and that, too, by a Being competent to change the disposition, if he would, is the most monstrous scheme that ever impudence and effrontery ventured to call just. It appears as if theologians, growing weary of making discriminations in the degree of offence committed by men according to their ideas of sin, had consigned them all to perdition to save time and trouble, just as Blood-Councillor Hessels in the Netherlands, waking up from a sound sleep, used to shout out 'Ad patibulum' as his verdict in every case that came up, and, having thus disposed of the matter on general principles, sank back into repose.

If, then, we allow that a divine government is just which institutes such atrocities, inasmuch as we hold up the divine administration of justice to be the pattern and model of human justice, the divine being perfect and the human imperfect, the divine being pure and holy while the human is impure and only approximately righteous, every attempt to conform the methods of human administration to the divine is a step in the way of moral improvement. But in order to exhibit in human affairs a governmental order representative of God's sovereignty, there must be some authorised vicegerency among mankind. Hence arises a Church and a priesthood to interpret to men God's will, and to enforce His decrees so far as may be. Sometimes the power they have had has been a temporal power of a very wide scope; sometimes it has been merely a moral influence. But in either event the result is to create an aristocracy of those who assume to be saved from God's wrath, their guilt forgiven, and thus to occupy a superior position to the mass of mankind, who are not only under actual condemnation, but under a *deserved* sentence. The latter have no *rights*; they can obtain grace on certain conditions, but it is only grace, not what is due and owing; they are disobedient, wicked, and without moral health of any sort. They are really outlaws, and entitled to no consideration.

The most terrible consequences to vast numbers of human beings have resulted from the creation of just such a sentiment as this. The whole series of religious persecutions has proceeded from this notion, and been justified by this principle. The elect were God's instruments to inflict deserved punishment upon those who were still in sin. In the opera of the 'Huguenots,' when St. Bris announces that the impious and guilty sect shall shortly disappear,

De Nevers asks, 'Who condemns them?' The answer is, 'Heaven.'  
'And who will smite them?' 'We!'

Noble hearts, supporters of the faith,  
Citizens and warriors,  
Listen to my thoughts.  
Throughout the city let the band be dispersed,  
In darkness and silence occupy every road ;  
Then at the given signal  
Let us all rush to slay.

Let us run, let us slay ;  
From fire and from the sword  
Not one shall escape.  
The soldiers in vain  
Shall ask you for mercy.  
Let the child and mother fall,  
No age be spared.  
Heaven wills it, commands it ;  
Thus for our sins  
Grace will be obtained.

St. Bartholomew is but a specimen of countless massacres instigated by religious zeal and encouraged by the principle that those who do not adopt a stated means for escaping the ban of almighty wrath are outlaws whom any man may destroy and be praised for his deed.

The foundation of temporal power upon assumed divine authority could scarcely have been made secure without the aid of those sentiments which are developed by the assertion of and belief in the doctrine of sin. The history of the struggle on the part of ecclesiastics and their allies and dependents to retain power is the history of a contest for justice against injustice, for liberty and man's natural rights against oppression. The battle for toleration involved not merely the right to the expression of one's own religious beliefs without molestation, but it was a contest for rights of property, rights of private action, and effort in the pursuit of happiness, and very often for life itself. This being so, to characterise the doctrine in question as immoral, is to use very feeble language. It is dangerous to human rights ; in its tendencies not only subversive of progress, but inimical to law and order.

Fortunately, in the most advanced nations, there has been effected a divorce between church authority and state authority,

by which the latter assumes to control the secular and temporal relations of men, the former applying itself to the regulation of moral conduct by a system of rewards and punishments, having their chief interests in a future life. But though the church in such a case cannot directly govern public policy, it must necessarily exercise an indirect control. For the church creates and sustains moral sentiments which determine individual character. Moral sentiments are made up of sympathies and antipathies. These latter will issue in action according to dispositions; they will influence both our conduct towards others and the development of our own characters. Indeed, out of moral sentiments grow political and social sentiments, which determine our laws. Statutes and decisions are but the offspring of moral sentiments, and depend upon them for vitality. If, then, there exists in the community a number of people who are believed to be condemned of God, they as a class will stand also under a moral and social condemnation in greater or less degree.

Thus, while the progress of civilisation has established civil rights upon a secular basis of principles of natural right, it is still the case that such a doctrine as that of sin creates and perpetuates sentiments which tend toward institutions and toward individual conduct sometimes positively unjust, and at least clearly maleficent.

It is not easy to distinguish the unjust from the maleficent effects of the prevalence of such beliefs as I am now criticising. Injustice is a higher degree of maleficence, and maleficence makes toward injustice. It cannot be disputed that a church whose cardinal doctrine is the one in question is responsible for all the terrible infractions of natural rights which have occurred in the many religious persecutions of the world's history. And whatever blessed results may have followed from the preaching of the gospel of love by this same church, it is equally true that the most baneful effects upon human welfare have been wrought through an insistence upon the depravity of man and his condemnation unless prescribed methods of avoidance are adopted. But it may be said that in present times, when toleration is the rule, and private rights are secure, there is no likelihood of any injustice being perpetrated through the maintenance of beliefs in man's sinfulness and worthlessness in the sight of God. If this should be urged, I desire to call attention to at least two particulars in which existing laws infringe directly upon private rights and accomplish flagrant injustice, under the plea that a man who does not yield allegiance to the



dominant system of religion has forfeited some of his rights as a citizen, and ought to be punished.

We may first instance the blasphemy laws. Whoever blasphemes against God or Jesus Christ is liable to fine and imprisonment. This not only applies to vulgar profanity, but also to expressed disbelief in the christian scheme of redemption. It is very significant that in the United States an enforcement of the blasphemy laws has been urged quite strongly in some quarters <sup>1</sup> against Robert G. Ingersoll, a very able and eloquent orator, who has ventured to attack publicly the ordinary religious doctrines. The ground upon which the laws rest is that the man who offends, insults the Almighty, and that it is the business of the state to vindicate Him. This is to assert that the basis of public administration is theocratic, and not democratic; rights, then, are determined by the Divine sovereignty, and not by ethical relations of men to each other. When, therefore, with this theory goes the doctrine that all men are sinners deserving of eternal death, we have the system that produced the Inquisition, and may be in a fair way to have the deeds of the Inquisition repeated. There is precisely the same justification for these latter that there is for the blasphemy laws. Now, in enlightened states, justice does not rest on any such foundation. It depends solely upon human relations. It is right that men be let alone to work out their own destiny unless they injure others. It is just to those others that they be protected, and for this purpose the state government is maintained. Granting the soundness of this view, to make a crime of blasphemy is a patent injustice. No injury is committed against any man, the freedom of nobody is abridged. Possibly, profanity might be put in the same category as obscenity, and condemned as indecent; but the blasphemy statutes go much farther than this, and they are usually justified, not because the offence they punish falls within the class of minor improprieties injurious to good morals, but because it is an act of high treason against the Supreme Governor. Hence, either we must abandon the idea of justice as constitutive of our governmental institutions in free countries and return to theocratic systems, or we must recognise the fact that blasphemy laws are a relic of theocratic injustice, and inimical to the commonweal.

A disability created by law against infidels has not even the excuse that common decency requires state prohibition. It is still

<sup>1</sup> Pennsylvania and Delaware.

the case that atheists are not allowed to testify in courts of justice in many places, on the ground that their testimony is not worthy of credence. It may be too much to charge this disability wholly to the influence of the doctrine of sin, inasmuch as it might exist irrespective of that doctrine; but it is part and parcel of the system founded on the depravity of mankind. The man who disbelieves in God and His chosen method of redemption, of course stands condemned to eternal perdition, and that deservedly. Hence he is so utterly corrupt that his testimony is worthless.

Now, everybody of the most ordinary degree of intelligence knows that atheists and infidels are often most exemplary citizens, of scrupulous honesty, and lovers of truth. They may be mistaken as to religious truth; but if the love of truth, as such, were not strong in them, they would scarcely incur the penalties of their atheism and infidelity. To brand such persons as incapable of giving honest testimony is as gross and flagrant an outrage as can be imagined next to actual confiscation of property and deprivation of liberty or life. Its certain teaching is to destroy reputation of the party whose evidence is excluded, and often it may work failures of justice to others.

In negative ways not amounting to positive injustice the evil character of the doctrine of sin as affecting the general happiness is painfully conspicuous. People who refuse to accept the prevailing religious creed may indeed preserve their civil rights. Their property may not be confiscated; they may not be thrown into prison or executed as malefactors; but they will be certain to be deprived of some of the advantages which others share. Sympathy will be withdrawn from them and antipathies aroused against them. Instead of being helped, they will be all the time hindered; in place of honour they will meet with animadversion and contempt. The avenues of emolument and preferment will be wholly or partially closed to them. They will not be respected by their fellows, and their interests will be esteemed of little importance. It will be of comparatively slight moment whether they starve or survive; the feeling will rather be that it were better if they perished altogether. And if they are not actively helped out of the world, it will seem favour enough if they are permitted to live till they die of want. That this picture is not overdrawn I think many will bear witness. Both in Old England and in New England I myself have personally known of quite extreme social and business discrimination against those who are assumed to be under the

ban of the Almighty. Their character is not esteemed good; and thus they are deprived of that trust and confidence which good character ensures. And all this quite irrespective of whether they, in reality, have or have not a good character. They are not judged by their true moral dispositions, but by their assumed moral dispositions. Correct standards of estimation are not applied to them. They may have all the philanthropy of a Howard, and it will count for naught. Their theological beliefs are made indicia of their goodness or badness of heart. A brutal and wicked antipathy is hence suffered to grow up against such as refuse to accept the common doctrines, and thus a serious injury is done without adequate cause. Positive beneficence is completely repressed, and at most there is negative beneficence—frequently not even the latter, but, instead of it, some degree of positive maleficence. That all these things are deleterious to the general happiness does not admit of doubt. If such a condition were abolished, the estate of those who inflicted the injury would in nowise be lessened, and a weight of oppression would be removed from the other class. Many would be bettered, and no one made worse. This, according to all but the theological standards, is a gain to morality and to the social and political welfare of the community.

In close association with the general effect upon the people at large must be noticed the influence upon individual development and perfection of a doctrine like the one under consideration. And, first of all, let us observe the hardening and searing effect which a belief in such doctrines has upon the conscience, which ought always to be sensitive to right and wrong. We frequently see this in both clergymen and laymen. A large class of one's fellow-beings, indeed the large majority of the human race, is considered to have done that which causes them to deserve the severest punishment. No penalty is too great, and while it is lawful and honourable to pity and save by urging these unfortunates to accept of proffered mercy, yet so long as the latter venture to claim anything on the score of justice they are fit only for the fire and the sword. When, therefore, they are visited with misfortune or meet with cruelty, harshness, or oppression at the hands of men, instead of that lively sympathy which ought to arise in a well-balanced and well-regulated mind, and to prompt the exercise of activity to relieve the sufferer, there is an insensibility to his wrongs or a positive satisfaction in his ill-fortune, arising from the feeling that he is receiving punishment for his deserts. 'Who

condemns them? Heaven! And who will smite them? We!’ Although actual invasion of civil rights may awaken sympathy for the oppressed, yet where the wrong does not amount to more than the natural effects of maleficence less than civil injustice, the moral callousness of which I have been speaking often exists. The result is that the altruistic character is dwarfed. The sympathies of a man with his own kind are restricted and narrowed. He persuades himself that it is his duty to love not all but a few of his fellows. Crimes against liberty, property, and life are of much less heinousness, or even may not be crimes at all if committed against the heterodox. The rights of man as man may be quite forfeited by reason of his doctrinal beliefs. It is by no means a long step to a state of mind which justifies war against nations, the enslavement of individuals, and the confiscation of property. Such has been the outcome of such sentiments, and to such results the tendency is inevitable. Counteracting influences may do their work, but so far as this belief in the deserved perdition of man at the hands of God has any ascendancy, it deadens all noble and generous feeling, it destroys genuine humility, dries up the springs of charity, narrows the moral vision, and eliminates that genuine altruism which lies at the foundation of all moral sentiment, and which is expressed in that rule which the founder of christianity laid down as the standard of action—‘Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.’

The pharisaical self-righteousness, which esteems that ‘I am holier than thou,’ is all the time fostered by the conviction that the few (*quorum pars magna sum*) are redeemed and the many lost. I am God’s companion and favourite, my next-door neighbour is under God’s wrath and decree of outlawry. Whatever professions of self-depreciation are made, there is inherent the secret self-gratification and self-exaltation which my esteemed, worthier, and better position entitles me to cherish. This is another phase of the same deterioration adverted to in the preceding paragraph, and it issues in an exclusive and selfish disposition inimical to that true manhood and womanhood, to attain the fulness of which all high ideals of life stimulate and encourage the mental and moral activities.

While the adherence to this baleful dogma is sure to develop in the individual perverted notions of morality, occasioning low and imperfect ideas of moral duties towards one’s fellows, it is no mean hindrance to the growth of the highest and best religious

sentiments. The very life to subserve the purposes of which this doctrine is deemed essential is shockingly debased. For, if there be a God whose very being is Truth, Justice, and Love, what more flagrant insult could be offered to Him than to attribute to Him a morality worse than that of the most cruel and bloodthirsty Eastern or African despot? And what a blighted, shrivelled, and meagre spiritual life must be that which draws its inspiration from an ideal of a Supreme Being capable of such stupendous atrocity! The christian religion never made much progress toward satisfying the spiritual needs of men, and toward becoming the religion universal through this conception of a Deity. It was forced to create another God, who, by becoming incarnate, came to possess human sympathies and sacrificed himself to appease the wrath of the first God. It is wholly through the ideal character exhibited in Jesus Christ that christianity has had any converting power over men. Fear has doubtless driven many to come within the church, and to attempt doing the things which the church has held necessary for salvation. But fear has no vitalising influence upon character. It will repress but it does not produce growth. The social sentiments and their sympathies are the outcome of love, not fear; and individual development is most perfect only where the social sentiments take account of the happiness of each as essential to the good of the whole. Through preaching the Golden Rule, and encouraging the types of character which are dominated by this precept, an altruistic principle has largely pervaded and controlled christianity, spite of the hideousness of some of its doctrines. And that spirituality upon which the christian preachers often insist is, as we have seen, prominently a growth of altruism. Jesus Christ is made the ideal of love; his rule of love the great rule of life. In order to give authority to the gospel of love, and at the same time preserve what was esteemed essential to the dignity, greatness, and absolute sovereignty of the Divine Being, men invented the crude and self-contradictory fiction of a Trinity in Unity. Instead of dismissing utterly the doctrine of sin and atonement, they sought to combine in the Deity love and hate, evil and good, in a mystical and revolting *melange* of the best and the worst traits of human character. As a consequence, we discern among the adherents of the christian religion and those whose lives are moulded by its influence, here an inner life of sweetness and light, there a spiritual atmosphere murky with the fumes of the pit. The former life is ennobling to its

possessor, just toward God and man, beneficent to the race; the latter is debasing to self, atrociously unjust toward others, and not less so toward the Supreme Being; while upon mankind in general its effect, as we have noted, is maleficent in every direction in which its influence is exerted.

It thus appears that the doctrine of sin in its influences upon conduct has a profoundly and widely immoral tendency both in regard to dispositions and actions having primary reference to personal well-being and individual development, and also in regard to dispositions and actions, bearing first relation to the well-being of others and to the general happiness. This being the case, we naturally are moved to inquire how such a barbaric dogma came into prominence as a canon of religious belief, and why it has been upheld with such tenacity? But it is not difficult to answer these queries. The doctrine, I apprehend, is a product of the same motive causes which have produced war, murder, robbery, torture, and the whole catalogue of crimes against life and property. It is an offshoot of the predatory impulses, evincing as it does the '*aigre-douce pointe de volupté maligne*,'<sup>1</sup> so conspicuous in the savage and by no means absent from the civilised character. If men are brought into mortal conflict, to end in the death or mutilation of one or both, with the spoils to the victor, it is not strange that they should think the Supreme Being in His dealings with men treated His enemies in similar fashion. And if their ideas of governmental order allowed the wholesale murder of their fellows in war, or to satisfy the demands of sovereignty, we ought not to be surprised that they should formulate like principles for the Divine administration. All religions are marked by the ascription to their deities of such attributes as are most in favour in human characters. For a long time in the history of the race courage was the highest of all virtues; and courage involved practice and success in the business of the soldier. Now, everyone knows that no man succeeds in anything unless his heart is in the work. He must have the enthusiasm of his calling. The profession of the soldier forms no exception. Quick sympathies for the sufferings of others, regard for human life, are hindrances to the warrior's achievements. 'War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it,' were the memorable words of Gen. William T. Sherman to the citizens of Atlanta. To Alexander and Napoleon lives

<sup>1</sup> Montaigne.

counted for naught, except as they served the purposes of the ruler. A cruel, ferocious, bloodthirsty disposition is a necessary concomitant of the militant spirit, which was the governing spirit of the earliest societies. This was not merely ferocity for an end, but cruelty for its own sake, a panting 'for the dreadful privilege to kill.' We have considered how it is entirely in accordance with human nature that the things we are led to do habitually for a purpose become finally in themselves pleasurable as forms of activity. Art and literature thus became ministers to war, which is only organised murder and robbery. Ideals of Beauty and Goodness became thoroughly tainted with the malevolent sentiments which so generally formed the character. Hence it was inevitable that religion should be affected in like manner; and when religious beliefs were established after predatory models of nobility of character, they of course had their reactive effect to sustain and renew the dispositions to which they owed their birth.

When once such conceptions of the Deity as were engendered by the predatory appetites obtained a permanent lodging in the human mind, and systems of doctrine respecting the relations of man to God were created and promulgated in accordance with such conceptions, their perpetuation would necessarily depend upon the continuance and force of the sentiments underlying them. Indeed, they would be likely to survive modifications of those sentiments which affect action. Conservatism in matters of religious belief has been more marked in the world's history than conservatism in politics or in private moral action. As a matter of fact, we find that the doctrine before us for consideration has endured and is maintained where the immorality of war has been largely recognised, and private murder and robbery have been universally condemned. No one being able to verify the truth of this doctrine, it has seemed to many a speculative and not a practical matter, and not worth combating, its deleterious influences not being clearly apprehended. Moreover, it has been so thoroughly counteracted by the influence of the doctrine of love that it has been possible to satisfy the religious appetites with the latter and still maintain one's place in the christian church, all that is required being to admit the truth of the former and to preach it to the inpenitent with the promises of salvation. It is the increasing pre-eminence of the gospel of love over that of hate which has given vitality to christianity, wherever it has had its greatest

success. And so far forth as the gospel of love has prevailed the doctrine of sin either has been obscured or has been softened down in its more obnoxious features. If it could have been totally eradicated the christian system would have been saved a most ugly blemish.

In answer to the considerations which have been presented, it may be urged that we can entertain no ideal of a perfectly holy and pure God without supposing that sin is so utterly abhorrent to His nature that a being tainted with it must be perpetually under His wrath and displeasure; that to entertain any other idea is to cherish low views of the Divine perfection. The answer to this objection has been already referred to. A perfect character is perfect only in its relations to some other personality. If God be perfectly holy His holiness of character must be judged either in its relations to some other god or supernatural being or to men. So-styled orthodox christianity supplies us with three persons in a Trinity. If, then, the holiness of God the Father in the eyes of His fellows of the Trinity requires the eternal condemnation of all His creatures, how can such holiness be appreciated by God the Son when the latter thinks it necessary, in order to satisfy his ideals of character, to suffer an ignominious death in human form in order to propitiate this wrath of the Father? Certainly, we have no conceptions of personality which can give us the least comprehension of such a relationship as allows one Divine Person to be full of antipathy to men, and another to be full of sympathy; one admiring and honouring the other for his antipathy, while at the same time so sympathising with the objects of that antipathy as to be willing to gratify the wrath of the other in his own person. Certainly the theological doctrine of the Trinity and the Son's atonement to appease the Father's anger is the most puerile, clumsy, absurd, preposterous, and nauseating dogma that was ever put before intelligent human beings as an article of faith. On the other hand, considering God in relation to man, it is quite impossible to regard Him as a God of moral perfection at all when He is omnipotent and prefers to leave His creatures sinful and torture them rather than to abolish the sin by His own fiat. All this, together with the impossibility of making out in human actions any such thing as sin toward God, save in injury to fellow-men, we have already sufficiently discussed. There is hence no force in any argument that the doctrine of sin is necessary to the idea of a Perfectly Holy Moral Governor.



It may also be claimed that the high ideal of perfection, implied in the conception that God is absolutely holy and man absolutely depraved, is extremely salutary in its moral influences, by impressing upon men the need of an absolute and thorough regeneration, and thus stimulating their efforts to attain a higher life. But how is anyone to be made better by being led to believe that, use his utmost efforts, he never can be otherwise than totally depraved? And if, then, it is said that his condemnation is just, how is his morality going to be improved by pointing out to him a way of avoiding and defeating justice, and encouraging him to seek it? This very act by which he is assumed to become a new and clean moral creature is a fraud against the Divine justice! There is no escape from this conclusion if we suppose that justice demands the eternal punishment of men and that the Divine justice does not vary. It is impossible to see how morality is to be stimulated by fear, and its consequent efforts to escape and thwart justice. If, however, God's grace in saving men arises because it is right that they be saved—a protection they are justly entitled to at the hands of a righteous sovereign—I can conceive of a theology that will be a help to moral conduct. The other seems to me certain to dry up all the springs of moral effort.

Unless morality is made to mean something different from what it actually does mean in governing the relations of men and women to each other, and unless liberty and civil rights, as the basis of social order, be denied, there is no place in a moral system for any such doctrines, principles, or notions as are involved in this fiction of theologians, despots, popes, and priests concerning the depravity of man in the sight of God. If hence there should result a divorce between religion and morality, and antagonism of one against the other, no one ought to hesitate to cast in his lot with the moral rather than with the religious, nor fear to abide all the consequences both here and hereafter.

Beyond the clouds, beyond the encircling night,  
Faith wanders fearless ; though the skies be dim,  
She sees, far off, the white-winged seraphim ;  
With us she will not stay. 'To worlds more bright,'  
She cries, 'I fain would pass ! This piteous sight  
Of earth I love not—nay, with joyous hymn  
Through the void air I would ascend to Him  
Who reigns unseen, Supreme and Infinite.'

‘Farewell, then, sister ! Yes,’ Love sighs, ‘farewell !  
 On earth with these I love will I abide ;  
 With these I love ! My children, ’mid the flowers  
 And joys of life, contented will we dwell.  
 Join hands, be kind, be just, fear not dark hours,  
 Though Faith be fled, yet Love shall be your guide.’

The immorality of the doctrine of sin furnishes corroboration of its untruth. For no ethical principle is true which legitimately conducts us to practical precepts deleterious to morality. I do not mean that we should reason in a circle, proving theoretical truth by practical morality, and yet determining the latter by the former. But having established the truth or falsity of a principle, its effects, when applied, do furnish corroborative evidence of the correctness of our judgments. In the present case, making the largest concessions, we found that even the ‘evangelical’ ought to have, upon the authority of the Bible, the most serious doubts as to the truth of this dogma of depravity ; while to everybody else its falsity must be clear. We have also pointed out that it has led to the most dreadful crimes against life, property, and reputation in times past, and that its moral influences are thoroughly deleterious. The conclusions to which we must come, therefore, are that, so far as society is concerned in any of its organised institutions—the family, the state, the church—this doctrine should be strongly reprobated as inimical both to truth and to a good social order. Its recognition in any manner in laws, in creeds, or in education, should be opposed by all who have at heart the good of mankind.

Each individual, according to temperament, education, and habits generally, will be more or less sensible of the difference between right and wrong, and will be more or less impressed with his responsibility to his fellow-men for his conduct. Imperfection in his own life, error, and wrong-doing will occasion regret and remorse. But whatever he may have done, or omitted to do, there is no necessity for his adding to his natural punishment the thought that, *over and above* his ill-behaviour to men, he has committed any offence against the Author of his being, which has to be atoned for or expiated.

HIS SIN AGAINST GOD, IF IT EXIST, IS IN HIS SIN AGAINST HIS FELLOWS. Whatever penalties attach to the latter he must expect and bear ; and so far as he gives to these sins and these penalties a religious colouring ; so far as he regards the approval or disapproval of a Divine Intelligence in connection with his thoughts,

dispositions, and deeds, no theoretical or practical objection can be raised which cannot be raised against all religion. If, therefore, a doctrine of sin against God be held at all, it must be constructed upon this foundation. But the claim that man sustains a relationship to a Supreme Being which allows of any independent or peculiar sinfulness, or any heinousness of sin, beyond that just mentioned should be dismissed as a figment, a relic of both ignorance and wickedness, disreputable to present enlightenment, and contrary to that altruistic sentiment which recognises, seeks to secure, and to preserve the brotherhood of man.



PART IV.

THE INSTITUTIONAL FETICH.

‘Wherefore it follows that men are not to unite themselves together in order to forego any portion of their individuality, but only to lessen the exclusiveness of their isolation; it is not the object of such a union to transform one being into another, but to open out approaches between the single natures; whatever each himself possesses, he is to compare with that which he receives by communication with others, and while introducing modifications in his own being by the comparison, not to allow its force and peculiarity to be suppressed in the process. . . . Wherefore it appears to me that the principle of the true art of social intercourse consists in a ceaseless endeavour to grasp the innermost individuality of another, to avail oneself of it, and, penetrated with the deepest respect for it as the individuality of another, to act upon it—a kind of action in which that same respect will not allow us other means for this purpose than to manifest oneself, and to institute a comparison, as it were, between the two natures before the eyes of the other.’

WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT.—*Essay on the Sphere and Duties of Government.*

## CHAPTER XVI.

### *AUTHORITY AND INDIVIDUALISM.*

AT the present day moral, and especially religious, teachers are calling the attention of the thinking world to the predominance of ideas leading to the assertion of the individual's right to think and act for himself independently of extrinsic restraints, and to thereby escape many dangers likely to result from undue subordination of authority to individualism. The Bishop of Long Island, Right Rev. Dr. A. N. Littlejohn, thought this a subject of so great importance, that when he was invited to preach a course of sermons in England in 1880, before the University of Cambridge, he selected Individualism as his general theme, and endeavoured to show the necessity for checking and limiting the individualistic movements of the times in politics, the family, and in religion. He says in his first sermon: 'Certainly it will not do; it is neither wise nor safe to trust the individual, as things now are, to settle absolutely for himself, and so to some extent for others, all questions of duty, all claims of law, all demands made upon him by the authority of Church and State, or even of the family and of general society. He is yet a long way off from the intelligent and balanced mastery of self which would justify such a trust. Outward guides, civil and ecclesiastical, must still, and for a long time to come, stay his often feeble steps, and light up the dim gropings of his moral reason.'

With a like solicitude, and influenced by similar considerations, President Seelye, of Amherst College, in Massachusetts, preached a baccalaureate sermon in 1883 having for its topic 'Growth through Obedience,' in which he endeavoured to show (if the newspapers correctly report him) that 'growth in wisdom, growth in power—power over nature, power over one's self, and power over others—and growth in character, only come through the submission of the self-will to authority.' He further says: 'For the last three hundred years there has been steadily growing in the civilised

world a disposition to assert the individual will above the restraints of authority.' 'Our chief peril—and there are signs enough to show that it is grave—consists, I think, in the undue exaltation of our liberty.' 'The war upon property and the family—the two institutions upon which the very existence of society depends—is as evident in America as in Europe.' 'We make our law dependent on our liberty; in other words, we are determined to have such laws as we will, rather than to will such laws as we ought to have. But when liberty is put first, and only the law is permitted which we choose to permit, the liberty soon sinks to a license, and the license descends into anarchy, and the anarchy only issues in a despotism.'

Having in preceding parts of this work taken from England and Germany, respectively, representative examples of doctrines criticised; for the present topic we will find our texts in the words of the two American authors just quoted.

These two give by no means the only expressions of this kind of sentiment; but, uttered by representative men whose habits are reflective, and who make it their business to observe the signs of the times and to throw the weight of their influence in favour of what they consider right and against what is wrong, such expressions are entitled to respect, and ought to command attention on the part of all who have like purposes, in order that we may ascertain whether the dangers suggested are real or fanciful, whether the fears revealed are well or ill founded, and whether the remedies indicated are the proper ones to be of avail under existing circumstances.

Accordingly I invite the reader who has at heart the best interests of humanity to consider with me this question of Authority and Individualism in the several aspects in which it affects human welfare. Eternal watchfulness is the price of liberty, and we ought ever to be alert to discover and thwart tendencies towards social disruption or disorder wherever they lie latent or may be made manifest.

The sentiment criticised both by Bishop Littlejohn and President Seelye is typified in the doctrine of Protagoras' '*Homo Mensura*': Πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἄνθρωπος, τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἐστὶ, τῶν δὲ οὐκ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἐστίν. Man (i.e. the individual man) is the measure of all things; of things that are, that they are; of things that are not, that they are not. Certainly, upon first thought there does not seem to be anything very alarming in this dictum,



though Plato regarded it as poor philosophy, and attempted to overthrow it in two dialogues. Everything is to each man as it seems. I must be the final judge for myself of what is right and wrong, and govern my conduct accordingly. St. Paul inculcated much the same kind of a rule in that chapter of his Epistle to the Romans wherein, after rebuking those who presumed to judge others, he said, 'So then everyone of us shall give account of himself to God;' and also before this: 'One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.'

Indeed, it is not easy to see how we can establish any different order than that the individual shall be the final judge of what is good and bad so far as he himself is concerned. Within the sphere of intellect, we certainly cannot expect that a man will believe what he does not believe. Convincing people by authority has never succeeded in this world's history. We can close their mouths, but cannot stop the working of their minds. The same thing may be said of their sympathies and antipathies. Expression may be prevented by outward constraint, but not the feelings themselves. Equally true is this of volitions and dispositions. We may persuade, enlighten, inform, put motives before people, but the belief, the emotion, the sentiment, the will, the act, is each man's own. If this were not so, it would be highly irrational to hold any person responsible to anybody for his conduct. And if a man has a mind at all, everything must necessarily be to him as it appears. To assert this is only saying whatever is, is. It appears quite evident, therefore, that we must seek for some derived meaning of *Homo Mensura*, or some application of the dictum which is not exhibited on the surface of things for the dangerous or injurious consequences which are apprehended from individualism.

Bishop Littlejohn does not define very exactly the term which expresses the subject of his university sermons, but characterises individualism as an undue exaltation of the individual as an end of effort, and of the individual reason as a court of last resort to settle disputed questions of social, moral, political, and religious life. 'We are told,' he says, 'that not only do the family, the state, and the church exist for the benefit of the individual, and in his advancing power and glory find the only power and glory which they can legitimately claim; but what is a far more radical and disturbing idea, that they have no divine and unchangeable principles of organisation; but, like all lower forms of corporate

life, are to be dealt with as the accidental and ever mutable embodiments of the social instincts of man. And, further, coupled with this drift, nay, as an inevitable effect of it, there is the notion that the only court of appeal, in determining the character and extent of these revisions and amendments, is not the collective, continuous judgment of mankind, nor any standard above and outside the individual; but each man's reason working out the problems for and by itself.'

The distinction between egoism and altruism does not seem to be what is meant by the contrast between individualism and authority, for altruism carries with it as an end the highest good of the greatest number of individuals, while egoism may tend to secure individual power to one or a few and impose authority upon all the rest. The term individualism, as used by those who deprecate its tendencies, appears to cover both ends and means. Bishop Littlejohn says it tends to the enforcement of the doctrine that institutions like the family, the state, and the church 'exist for the benefit of the individual.' So far the individual is made an end. Then follows 'a far more radical and disturbing idea,' namely, that the institutions named are to be dealt with not as divine and unchangeable in their principles of organisation, but as mutable embodiments of social instincts, liable to change and revision according to the judgment of the individual. To this degree individualism seems to be a method of viewing and treating the mutual relations of human beings, having only a tendency to an exaltation of the individual.

If Bishop Littlejohn does not express clearly and distinctly what he means by individualism, it will be necessary for us to find a meaning for him in the light of the facts he instances—a meaning, however, which he and those who agree with him will accept as covering the matters under discussion. In order to obtain a starting-point, it will be necessary to revert for a moment to the consideration of what the ends of society are, for this question of individualism and authority is obviously a social question, since it affects man most prominently in great departments of social life. And here I shall make use of a definition of society which will be quite acceptable to President Seelye, and, I presume, to Bishop Littlejohn also. Society is an organic whole, of whose members each is at the same time the means and the end of all the rest. Therefore the welfare of the individual is an end so far as it does not militate against the welfare of the rest. The

common freedom, and not merely the individual freedom, is to be considered as a political end determinative of rights; the general good, not merely the individual good, is the end of duty. The highest and broadest liberty should be accorded to the individual so far as it is consistent with the common liberty, but no farther.

To this extent I suppose thinkers like Bishop Littlejohn and President Seelye would agree with me. But the next step I shall probably have to take without their company. To me the idea of society above enunciated leads logically and necessarily to the conclusion that the chief social end to be sought is the highest happiness of the greatest number. They will say that the social *summum bonum* is not the greatest happiness of the greatest number; that the end of the individual is not his happiness, but his blessedness; and that his blessedness for himself and his worthiness in the sight of others consist in his obedience to the will of the Divine Author and Governor of the Universe; that hence the chief social end is the realisation of God's moral order in the world. This will more fully appear in the following words of Bishop Littlejohn: 'It is the delusion of man that he can make what God only can make, and that things so made have not only their source but their end in himself: when, from their very nature, they must begin and end in the purposes of Him who created man and nature and all being for Himself. Organic life, wherever it exists, bears the sign manual of Omnipotence, and completes itself only as it fulfils the divine idea out of which it sprang. It is the essential property of organic being that the whole exists before the parts; not the parts before the whole; that the parts can grow only as they are shaped, co-ordinated, and combined by the life principle working in and through the whole. Now, the Family, the State, and the Church are in this sense organic wholes. Each of them antedates and outlasts its individual parts. Each, as embodying and applying the necessary laws of human development, precedes the individual, and provides the conditions apart from which the individual could not realise a developed personality. Man can come to manhood only as he is integrated in consciousness and character by Institutions which are God's workmanship as truly as himself is. This is true of the Family and the State in the natural order, and of the Church in the supernatural. It is well-nigh impossible, certainly it is at best a visionary, Abstraction to conceive of the individual outside his necessary relations to these divinely established fellowships. He can realise himself only

through what is other than himself; and, speaking generally, it is only by the negation or surrender of his own individual self to a larger self, that he comes to know the meaning of himself as a spiritual being. To be true to the actual as well as ideal order of rational life, we must reach the idea of any one of these organic Institutions, whether the Family, or the State, or the Church, not by first supposing a number of human beings—each complete in himself—and then by combining them to form the Institutions; but we must first conceive the Institutions in order to know the individuals.'

We now begin to discern what is intended by Individualism *versus* Authority, and Authority *versus* Individualism. It is not a question of egoism or altruism, though these are more or less involved in the controversy; it is not an issue of anarchy or government, though it will be claimed that order and stability depend upon the issue; it is an alternative presented between Secularism and Theocracy. On the one side is the assertion that the individual is ethically bound by no belief, doctrine, custom, habit, order, or institution which does not commend itself as right and just to his own judgment and conviction; that he is entitled to prove all things and hold fast to that which is good; to repeatedly question all existing institutions, modify, reform, or abolish them as general utility dictates; that the only rule of action and of limitation he ought to recognise is the greatest good of the greatest number; that nothing is good which does not appear to be good in the light of human experience; and that all institutions of society exist for the benefit of mankind, not mankind for the benefit of institutions. On the other side, it is maintained that the world is under a divine administration, in the course of which certain immutable and eternal truths have been revealed to men which it is their duty to accept, not because they are comprehended, nor because they seem reasonable to human intelligence, but because they come to us with authority as the revealed word of God; that in like manner certain institutions, notably the Family, the State, and the Church, have been ordained of God, and thus exist superior to any considerations of utility, transcending as ends all individual ends, and as means all the devices and expedients of individual reason. 'I counsel you,' says President Seelye in his baccalaureate address to his students, 'to employ all the growth in wisdom and power and character which you have gained, and are still to increase through your obedience, in the

effort to make more evident the supremacy of law, the authority of righteousness, the unqualified sovereignty of the Family and the State—each in its sphere—and the headship and lordship over all of the Son of God, who has the authority to execute judgment also because he is the Son of Man.’

Assuming that we have now got at the meaning of Individualism and its consequents, together with those opposed principles and sentiments which are indicated by the term Authority, we will proceed severally to examine the respective tendencies of Authority and Individualism in their bearings upon the Family, the State, and the Church.

## CHAPTER XVII.

*THE FAMILY.*

ONE individual does not make a family, neither one man nor one woman. Two individuals may dwell together and not constitute a family, as two adult men or two adult women. It is only when there exists a relationship of husband and wife, or parent and child, or foster-parent and ward, or the equivalent, that the family comes into being. Properly speaking a family means husband, wife, and child or children. There must be at least two individuals, though, as just remarked, this is not all that is required; and the complete idea of family life contemplates the relation of parent and child. Moreover, so far as the formation of the family is concerned, it arises through a voluntary union of man and woman; the relation of children to parents, for a time at any rate, being involuntary. It is not held morally obligatory upon any two to form the family union; the matter is left to the individual choices.

Whatever may be the origin and the obligations of this institution, as a matter of simple fact the term *Family* signifies an aggregation of individuals bound together under certain relationships. The family may be more than this, but Bishop Littlejohn and President Seelye would not deny that it is at least this. Now when we speak of acting, or legislating for or promoting the welfare of the Family, we must mean the individuals who compose the family. We may, indeed, have in mind the interest of many families existing and to exist, but then we change the object of our solicitude, and for the family substitute the state. As there would be no family without individuals making up the family, so the welfare of the family, apart from the welfare of the individuals comprised, is the welfare either of nobody at all, or of somebody entirely outside the family. This view is confirmed by the assertion made, as we have seen, by Bishop Littlejohn, that the family is an organic whole. Each member thus is an end and a means to all the rest.

If, then, the family is formed and maintained by the union of individuals in an organic relationship, its idea requires a limitation of individual choice, will, disposition, and action by the interests and welfare of the other individuals of that family. We may personify the family and speak of its end, but the family itself can have, strictly speaking, no end at all. The individuals who compose it have their ends, and those ends are ethically limited and modified by the family relationship. Each one ought to subordinate his own acts to the welfare of the others; and if he shows a disregard of their interests, he ought under proper circumstances to be compelled to regard those interests. Out of this idea spring all family rights and duties. There are no ends, purposes, benefits or injuries in, of, or to the family which are not such in, of, or to the individuals composing it, who mutually limit each other; and this limitation makes the ethics of the family.

It is very difficult to understand the meaning of the assertion, that the family antedates the individual. Certainly, according to the scripture account of the creation, the individual was historically prior to the family. Adam was first formed, then Eve; then began family life. Each family now established is created by individuals whose life as such is first developed. Undoubtedly all persons are born of union of the two sexes, and generally their union in family life. Doubtless the father and mother antedate the son and the daughter; but the former were individuals before they became a family. And on theological grounds, how it can be argued that God first created the family when the Bible says just the contrary is past finding out. Therefore it would seem that if Bishop Littlejohn in this matter means what he says, and asserts that the family antedates its components (that is, all of them), the very simple and obvious reply is that it does not.

Probably what he does mean is that inasmuch as all mankind grow up to individual manhood and womanhood under the moulding formative influence of some sort of family life which existed before they were born, that therefore the family as an institution was a part of God's plan of the world's organisation, and thus has a logical priority. 'The universal is the *prius* of the particular.' But it is one of the much-vaunted glories of christianity that it lays special stress upon God's care for the individual. The sabbath was a Jewish institution—a religious institution emanating directly from Jehovah. It then ought to have had a logical priority to the individual. It was an end in itself; so the Hebrew ecclesiastics

thought. Jesus of Nazareth, however, repudiated this doctrine and taught that the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath! The whole scheme of christian redemption points directly to the singling out of the individual as the objective point of all God's purposes in the world with respect to man—his elevation, perfection, salvation. Bishops and doctors of divinity then ought to have a care how they place any abstract idea or any concrete institution before the individual man as a superior object of consideration or end of activity. And as to the metaphysical dictum above quoted, adopted by Bishop Littlejohn, the latter does very well to observe immediately after expressing it that 'the universal must not be conceived as having any reality apart from the particular, or the organic body apart from its members. The whole integrate and are integrated by the parts. They at once feed and are fed by the individuals of which they are composed.' This last is quite true in my judgment; but, if so, how is the universal the *prius* of the particular? Without the particular it is an abstraction, having no reality. The whole does not exist before the parts, but the parts are necessary to form the whole.

Equally troublesome to our understanding is the remark that the family outlasts the individual components. Surely the particular family does not outlast its members. The family is broken up, but its component members survive and establish new families. Parents die while sons and daughters individually join with others outside the family to form entirely new centres of family life. If it be meant that the family as an institution survives particular individuals, it may be urged in reply that the individual is also an institution. Not a particular man, but man as such; the human individual appears at all times and for ever survives, though particular individuals perish. The individual exists continuously in just precisely the same sense as the family exists continuously. Particular families are disintegrated and destroyed, but *the family* endures; particular individuals die and pass out from the stream of the world's life, but *the individual* persists. One family succeeds another; one individual succeeds another; but alike in each case the type may be said to be persistent. We cannot avoid conceding that individuals are necessary to constitute the family; without individuals there would be no family. How then does the family as such outlast the individual?

Having now indicated what is meant by the family, and shown the basis of family ethics, I ask the reader to inquire with me how



Authority and Individualism affect the family relationship. In the first place, so far as adults are concerned, those principles which it is commonly said individualism adopts, prescribe as a rule of duty that each one shall act for the common interest and weal. It is just as true of the individualistic rule as it is of what Bishop Littlejohn claims as distinctive of the christian ideal. 'It teaches the individual that he can find his true life only by losing it in a life greater than his own. It puts him under a discipline of self-abnegation from the start.' The author I am quoting seems very much disposed to believe that one bulwark of individualism is the philosophy which supports the greatest happiness or utilitarian doctrines of morals. If this be so, it is at least impossible to show a more completely altruistic *theory* of conduct for the individual than that belonging to the philosophy thus in considerable measure held responsible for individualistic excesses. This philosophy adopts unqualifiedly the Golden Rule as the controlling precept of individual action, and inculcates the same as a precept for corporate and institutional action. Whatever individualism does which is injurious, either directly or indirectly, is done, therefore, in contravention of and in opposition to the ethical principles which belong to the utilitarian system of morals.

If the individualism be consistent, there is one thing which it may be expected to promote; and that is the equality of rights and duties on the part of the members of the family. The wife, for instance, is as important a member as is the husband; her ends, her happiness, her development is of as much consequence as his; her ethical position is in no wise inferior to his. The husband owes to the wife just as many duties as she to him. She is a person with all the rights of personality. He lives for her just as truly as she for him. Her authority is just as great as his in all family affairs. In somewhat similar manner the rights of the children are made more prominent. The Roman *patria potestas* doctrine is repudiated. Children are to be worked for as human beings having their own independent ends, which are to be respected. They are not to be considered as mere dependents owing allegiance to the parents, and to subordinate all their activity to the purposes and pleasure of the parents; but their welfare, read in the light of their own self-determinations, assumes a just importance, and is of equal consequence to the weal of the father or mother. This much is guaranteed by any theory of family relationship which makes each member the end and means of all the rest. I do not know whether

or not Bishop Littlejohn and President Seelye would regard the prevalence of sentiments like these as evidence of a war against the family ; but unless they do exist and shape conduct, no such thing as an organic interdependence of its members can subsist at all in any family.

Further pursuing this line of thought, it is clear that whenever in the family anyone attempts 'to play the sovereign,' and to absorb all the life of the others in his own selfish purposes, an immorality is committed and an injury done to the family, because an injury is done to certain members of the family. Now, it is far from my intention to deny that just this exhibition of egoism often occurs in families. Of course, when it does happen it is an instance of the undue exaltation of the individual ; but it equally evinces an undue abasement of other individuals in the family. There is too much individualism on the one side, and too little on the other. If, then, individualism were influential to make higher the low, it would tend to restore the equilibrium, which consideration for individuals aims to preserve. In all such cases, repression of one individual for the sake of others is what is needed. In a word, egoism must be abated and altruism cultivated.

Taking the history of family life as a whole, it seems to me that by far the greatest evil coming from individualistic egoism has been the assumed supremacy of the husband. From the time when women were carried off by force and became the slaves of their captors, down to the period when the husband, claiming to be God's representative, demands the submission of the wife to his behests, the female sex has been the suffering sex in family life. The autonomy of the wife has often, perhaps generally, been wholly denied. She has been overawed and overwhelmed by the superior might and the audacious assumptions of her lord and master. Whatever alteration for the better has occurred in the status of women has taken place, not alone in the reduction of individualism as it has been shown in the husband, but also in that increased development of individualism which has raised to greater prominence and importance the personality of the wife. This has not happened without a struggle, and that at the present day the wife has not attained a complete equality with the husband either in regard to property rights, personal liberty, or control of the children, existing laws, customs, and habits even in the most enlightened communities sufficiently prove. And yet in Bishop Littlejohn's sermons one looks in vain for any mention of this

injurious phase of individualism. One would have supposed that this very prominent instance of the wrong and the evil of the undue exaltation of the individual would not have escaped his notice. The fact that he omits to take note of it must, in the mind of the careful and serious thinker, cast much doubt upon the thoroughness of the Bishop's examination of the subject and the consequent value of his conclusions. Perhaps we ought to be grateful that Bishop Littlejohn has said no more on this topic than he has; for a prominent clergyman of his denomination—the Rector of Trinity Church in New York—in a series of lectures has been recently lamenting the departure of the good old times when women not only kept silence in the churches but in the household also, unless spoken to, and disapproving in the strongest terms all efforts to increase the liberty and independence of women. Dr. Dix even goes so far as to cry out against suggestions for giving women that weapon of self-sustenance and self-defence which is found in a higher education—— ‘Higher than what?’ This seems to indicate that he does not know what higher education is.

At the present time, it must be said, there exists in family life an evil which is probably due to an improper exaggeration of the importance of the individual, and a mistaken notion of the extent to which individual liberty should be allowed to prevail. This is the permission of self-will in children and youth. The vice, of course, is unequally prevalent, and is more characteristic of American than European life. But certainly in American families it is a conspicuous and growing evil. Whatever liberty the adult may claim, and whatever may be the relations of adults to each other, it is certain that neither the welfare of the individual, the family, nor the community will allow of unrestrained autonomy in children. There is a very wholesome truth in President Seelye's baccalaureate wherein he urges the necessity of obedience to secure a healthy growth. ‘His bashfulness in youth,’ quotes President Seelye from Xenophon on Cyrus, ‘was the very true vigour of his virtue and stoutness afterward.’ I have already adverted to the fact (Chapter XII.) that self-control never can be acquired without obedience to some outside authority in early life. This is a psychological fact amply verified. Without self-control and the power of self-determination, that individual's life is not safe, to say nothing of the dangers to others. The importance of training the young to self-government through obedience, I am very sure, is not appreciated as it ought to be. Children are too often

suffered to have their own way in everything; their whims are always consulted; they are taught to esteem themselves of prime importance in the family; they are admired and praised, but seldom corrected and restrained; they are brought forward, not kept in the background; instead of being taught to be modest and self-depreciating, they are allowed, if not encouraged, to be bold and self-asserting. As a consequence, they grow up self-willed, selfish, heedless of the wishes, the comforts, even the rights, of others; they possess an overweening confidence in themselves and but little respect for the wisdom of those of greater experience. Instead of coming to manhood and womanhood with a well-balanced, self-regulated, altruistic character, they have all the vices of an egoistic disposition, with the result of being of no use to their fellows and of comparatively little efficiency for the highest and best purposes of their own existence. They are of no positive benefit to the community, and are fitly prepared for all sorts of injuries to the social order, if opportunity occur and the chances of punishment are not too great.

I have no doubt that Bishop Littlejohn, as well as President Seelye, would heartily indorse what I have just said respecting the discipline of obedience as a necessity of education, and the prevailing laxity in the enforcement of this discipline in family life. My only quarrel with them would arise over the grounds upon which this obedience is to be required and justified. Perhaps it is not worth while to dispute about these at the present juncture, inasmuch as in other places I have enough difference of opinion to express over the principles (and their applications) which govern this whole subject. It is a wise maxim of jurisprudence not to disturb a judicial decision which is right because the reasons assigned for it are wrong. This, of course, will not apply to ethical discussions, a part of the object of which is to find out proper reasons, but when our criticisms of principles and arguments is sufficiently ample in other places, we might be excused for not finding fault with the course of thought leading to a conclusion with which we fully agree. Yet I must regard it as exceedingly unfortunate in that it tends to mislead, confuse, befog, and cast doubt on the correctness of the teaching to have such declarations made as the following by Bishop Littlejohn: 'Children are to serve and obey in all things, not because they are too weak to do otherwise; nor yet because to do so is the implied condition of food, shelter, and raiment; nor because of any animal or physical

consideration whatever ; but simply for the reason that *it is of the essence of the family that they should do so.*<sup>1</sup> Every practical mind will say that it is reason enough for children to be taught to obey because they *are* too weak to do otherwise, and because they owe obedience in consideration of food, shelter, raiment, protection, social advantage, education, and the like. It is expedient for the children and for society that they obey. This will be understood, but people will not understand, when they are told in terms that these are no reasons for obedience, but that children should obey inasmuch as it is of the essence of the family that they should do so. If this is what Bishop Littlejohn preaches he must expect that his hearers will either go to sleep in their pews, or will begin seriously to doubt whether it is right that children should obey their parents at all. His only salvation will be the possible obstinacy of some minds who will believe that children ought to be obedient, spite of what the Bishop says ; in the same manner as the Scotch layman, after his dominie had preached an elaborate sermon to prove the existence of God, on being asked by the latter what he thought of the sermon, said it was very fine, but he could not help believing there was a God after all ! At any rate, Moses, when he laid down the law, which bishops and other clergy accept on authority, did not esteem it worth his while to say anything about the essence of the family, but was quite content to give a utilitarian reason for the obedience of the young ; for he said, ‘Honour thy father and mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.’

Having now pointed out the advantages of individualism in the family relationship, and some prominent examples of its abuse, let me request the reader's attention to the influence of authority, and its claims as a remedy for the evils of individualism. President Seelye advises his young graduates to bend their energies to the making more evident ‘the unqualified sovereignty’ of the family in its sphere. Bishop Littlejohn says :—‘The family is an ordinance of God, and invested with an authority commensurate with the purpose for which it was ordained. Parents bear rule as God's own deputies, not by virtue of human law ; and they so bear it that no external power can lawfully restrain its legitimate exercise.’ If, then, the family is unqualifiedly sovereign, and invested with a paramount authority, it becomes interesting to inquire in whom is the interpretation and execution of this authority vested ?

<sup>1</sup> Italics mine.

Obviously it must be in some individual, or individuals; not in the children, for God's word, the most authoritative expression, enjoins: 'Children, obey your parents in all things.' Not in the wife, for the same scripture says: 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands;' and the church marriage service usually requires the bride to promise to obey her husband. It is in the latter, therefore, that the authority of the family is reposed. In any conflict of wills the husband is the arbiter, and his will is to prevail, not because he is necessarily the wisest or the best, not because what he proposes is most advantageous for the common weal, but because the 'unqualified sovereignty' of the family is vested in him. We thus discover, to begin with, that the principle of authority is responsible for that which we have claimed to be the greatest evil known in family life. The doctrine of authority, unless qualified, leads directly to, and has produced, all the various forms of domestic slavery. The family was just as much an institution in the days of the *patria potestas*, or even in ruder times, as it is at present. Why was it not as divine then as now? And what right had the individual to disturb its established order? Bishop Littlejohn concedes that the ownership of the wife by the husband, the son by the father was wrong, and that the growth of individualism in opposition to authority rectified that wrong. And yet he contends for the preservation of precisely the same dogma of authority which rendered possible and actual the gross despotism he himself condemns! In opposition to this I urge that a principle which leads to the most extreme and the worst exhibition of individualism in the family ought on Bishop Littlejohn's own grounds to be entirely displaced and set aside. If he fears that at present the individual is likely to be esteemed as superior to the organic whole, he surely ought to beware of a method of viewing the family organisation which forbids individual members to call to account or to question the claims to ascendancy of one individual who arrogates to himself a headship by reason of having been divinely vested with authority. The doctrine of authority has been from the beginning, and is to-day, a stumbling-block in the way of woman's liberty and advancement; it has even encouraged and been made the justification for brutality and oppression against gentleness and love; it has been, and is, a constant feeder of selfishness and disregard of the rights and the wishes of the weaker; it is an ally of all the worst traits in the domestic character; it is the foe of all the best developments of that character. Therefore I say that it is itself

hostile to and subversive of every correct idea of family life, and dangerous to the integrity of the family considered as a social institution. The truth is, this notion of authority has replaced the true idea of the family as a social unity of individuals, of whom each one is end and means of all the rest, by a fetich ignorantly worshipped with a grovelling and superstitious devotion, debasing to the devotee, and destructive of all noble ideals of what the family ought to be as typifying relationships which may be made of the greatest value, not only to the happiness of those principally concerned, but also of all mankind, both the present and future generations.

Passing now to the second instance of undue exaltation of the individual in the domestic sphere to which I referred, the supporters of the authority-system may regard it as self-evident that what is needed to cure the trouble is more authority and more respect for authority. Undoubtedly this is true in a sense; while in a sense also it is wholly untrue. If they mean that children shall be both taught and made to obey their parents, to repress selfishness, and to derive their greatest pleasure from the pleasure of others, I have nothing to say. They must be taught these things in the first instance without an explanation of why they must thus behave, because human nature is so constituted that presentative pain and pleasure determine actions which by repetition give birth to habits long before the representative powers have developed the mind sufficiently to allow reasoned conclusions to affect, much less to govern, conduct. Authority thus far is right because it is expedient and indeed necessary. But if the doctrine of authority requires, as I understand it does, that when conduct is to be influenced by appealing to the understanding of the child or youth, and by instilling a knowledge of right principles of action, then he is to have it impressed upon him that he ought to obey, not because it is best for him and others, but because it is of the essence of the family that he should do so, I totally deny that there is any virtue in the doctrine whatever. And I thus speak for the reasons before mentioned. In itself this declaration has no definable meaning; but it is admirably adapted and was no doubt originally invented (not, of course, by Bishop Littlejohn) to cover up gross individualistic tyranny, and in justifying this is its only vitality. Sooner or later youth will find this out, with the almost inevitable result of shaking their faith in precepts supported by such arguments. Morality has many times suffered because sustained by

false doctrine, as houses have suffered when built on the sands instead of on a rock. It is the worst possible method of education to found rules of conduct on false theories. To do this is not only to adopt an inefficient means to an end, but often it defeats the end sought.

Let us now examine some of the particulars in which the family is said to dominate the individual, again taking as our text the statements of the prelate whose words have already furnished so many points for our comments. If the family is an 'ordinance of God,' it is admitted also by Dr. Littlejohn that the individual 'has an end in himself.' 'He must be treated as more than an instrument or a slave. He bears God's image and is marked for an eternal as well as a temporal life. His franchises match his hopes and keep pace with his capabilities.' In this respect, then, the family does not dominate the individual any more than the individual dominates the family. In the second place, it is urged that 'the family dominates the individual, whether man or woman, because the marriage-bond is more than a simple contract or legal covenant that may be set aside by mutual consent.' This brings up the question of divorce, into the discussion of which I shall not enter, for the reason that I hope to make this topic the theme of a separate treatise, its importance demanding a more thorough examination than is possible here. I freely admit, however, that individualism maintains that marriage was instituted for men and women, not men and women for marriage, and claims that whether marriage ought to be entered into, or when once its responsibilities are assumed, whether or not the marriage union ought to be dissolved, is a question to be settled on the basis of whether or not the ends of married life in their relations to the married pair, their children, and the state, are to be promoted and secured by its continuance. But this seems to me to be a proper individualism necessary to realise the highest ideals of family life. In this matter as in everything else an excess of individualism, which ought to be reprobated, is the self-will and selfishness of either one of the parties, and the law ought never to allow itself to be made the means of shielding and protecting, and thus encouraging, egoistic self-absorption. Rights and duties should be made equally prominent. It is the duty of each to bear and forbear; but it is also the right of each that the other shall bear and forbear. If the rights of individuals are made the prominent object of attention, it is some evidence that the duties of the other party concerned in each case



are neglected. The way to settle difficulties of this sort is not to set up authority as a judge, whose dictates should be followed because they are the dictates of a sovereign whose word is law, but diligently to consider what each one's rights and duties are in the light of the ends of family life. On the one hand, to be jealous of preserving everyone's rights; and, on the other, to impress upon each one the obligations of moral duty. The true balance is always preserved when one individual is made unduly prominent by considering in precept and action the interests of other individuals. In this signification the family does indeed dominate the individual, but only thus; but by family is meant, as I have so often insisted, not any abstraction but the individuals who compose the family; it is their interests, their rights, their welfare that is to be consulted; and when these are injured, and only then, is injury done to the family.

A third respect in which the family is said to be entitled to rule the individual is 'because of an inherent attribute of sacredness.' This is simple fetichism. What warrant have we for asserting that the family is any more sacred than the individual? Holy Scripture does not say so. In the text of Bishop Littlejohn's first sermon we are told that God has made man a little lower than the angels and has crowned him with glory and honour. 'Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.'<sup>1</sup> And in the New Testament Jesus Christ declares 'This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day';<sup>2</sup> while Paul says, 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?'<sup>3</sup> Against such texts as these Bishop Littlejohn does not seem to be able to cite anything better than the Garden of Eden story, and the patriarchal savagery recorded in the book of Genesis. After all he does not incline to rest so fully upon scripture in this connection, for he proceeds to remark: 'Largely as this quality may proceed from Divine institution and enactment, it is quite as largely grounded upon the instincts and traditions of mankind in every age and in every land; and upon the universal conviction that the family is the nursery of the church and the nation; and that on the whole, as is the family, so will be the church and the nation.' It is quite true that the family is the nursery of the church and the nation through the fact that it is the

<sup>1</sup> Psalm viii. 5, 6.<sup>2</sup> S. John vi. 59.<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 16.

nursery of the individual. It is also true that if families generally are corrupt and depraved, communities of all sorts will be so ; but why ? Because the individuals who compose the families are corrupt and depraved, and the same persons are both members of the families and of the community. The family does not seem to be the end, but the individual ; the former being, in fact, but a means to the latter. It is important that family life be as perfect as possible, in order that individual life be made as perfect as possible. There is no more inherent sacredness about the one than the other ; or, if there be, it is rather in favour of the individual. The family is a venerable institution ; but the individual antedates it. And I do not know that anything is more sacred because it is old. Satan has existed a good while, as has also his kingdom ; but there is no inherent attribute of sacredness about either as a consequence. I do not wish to be understood as claiming that there is never a presumption in favour of long-existing institutions, nor do I desire to assert that the family is not to be respected as an institution. It is respectable, and ought to be respected ; but attributing to it an inherent sacredness which forbids or tends to break the force of individual questioning and criticism upon its methods of administration and internal regulation, and which prevents the assertion of individual rights, will only result in making the family relationship a burlesque upon what it ought to be, until finally it may indeed cease to be respectable because it is of so little value for all the essential purposes of its existence. I can do no better than to quote upon this point Bishop Littlejohn's own words farther on. The individual has the right to hold the family 'strictly to its own commission, and to demand from it all that it was intended to do for him. . . . He has not only a body to be reared, but a soul, a mind, a heart to be instructed, so that to him the highest freedom will be the service of truth and righteousness. Such are the claims of the individual upon the family, and the family serves the individual in all offices necessary to the satisfaction of these claims. The mastery of the individual over the family is the mastery of rights founded in the nature of things and the constitution of humanity.'

The family is not a concrete entity. It has as such no sacredness, no rights, no duties, no power or authority, and no imperatives of obedience. It is convenient for us to speak of the family as if it were a creature of flesh and blood instead of a representation of men's minds. All individual persons have rights and

duties, and some have authority over others in certain relationships whose ends and limits we indicate when we speak of family rights and duties. It is these rights and duties of human beings to each other which have alone an inherent sacredness, and these are always superior to any abstraction, or any assumed rights of, or duties to, an abstraction.

The conclusion to which all these considerations tend is that the principle of authority in family life is much more dangerous to the welfare of families than are the principles of individualism. For authority with the meaning of those who push forward its claims leads directly to the most vicious exaltation of the individual. It has no compensating advantages which are not secured by the development of the individualistic tendencies under the idea of the family which makes each one the end and the means of all the rest, and requires the limitation of individual volition and action by the interests, the good, the choices of all the others. In family education and training individualism, in allowing too great freedom is liable to foster selfishness and self-will; but this untoward result is not prevented by impressing the doctrine of authority upon the mind; it rather is hastened and increased, since it demands a blind, unreasoning, unquestioning obedience. The way to cure excessive individualism is to inculcate a greater respect for other individuals and their interests, and to create a deeper sense of our duties to them apprehended in the light of their welfare. This must ever beget a respect for institutions which in their nature and in their operation upon social life promote the highest degree of general good. Such a respect continues so long as these institutions accomplish their legitimate purposes; and, when they fail to do so, the individualistic spirit is quick to detect their insufficiency, and ready to alter their methods or reform their constitution to meet the varying needs of human progress and happiness. Authority makes no allowance for change of conditions; it extinguishes life itself by drying up or crushing out the vitalising forces; then, when disintegration and putrefaction occur, it changes the death and corruption to individualism. In the social organism individualism promotes evolution and integration; authority stops differentiation, and its consequent renewed integration, thus leading to inevitable disintegration and dissolution.

I am unable to discover anything in the 'war against the family,' which is alleged to be so evident, but a war against this principle of authority, which I have been endeavouring to show to

be so deleterious to true family life. If the family has existed since the beginning of history under all sorts of conditions, and surviving all kinds of changes, violent shocks, and slow but powerful movements in the organic life of the race, it is not likely to perish now. To use a favourite mode of expression of the supporters of authority, families may die, but *the family* continues. Its written and its unwritten laws may pass away, but they will always be followed by new statutes and precepts adapted to the changed circumstances. Family life is founded on constitutional wants of human nature; this is a better guaranty of its permanence than any principle of authority. When you destroy humanity you will destroy the family, but not till then, unless, indeed, man's nature be utterly and entirely changed. In heaven, it has been said, there is no marrying or giving in marriage; but this side of heaven marriage is likely to abide permanently as an institution. If, however, the constitution of human life should ever be so altered that family life should become no longer of utility to the race, no principle of authority ought to prevent its abolition; and certainly this doctrine must not be allowed to stand in the way of its attaining through natural differentiations the maximum of efficiency for all its ends. The individualism we should aim to suppress is egoism, however and wherever manifested. To do this the rights of *all* individuals must be jealously guarded, while on the side of obligation regard for the rights of others, and a sincere disposition to lose one's life in the service of others, ought to be secured and maintained. If this is done we can well afford to let *The Family*, as an abstract idea, or as an 'organic institution,' or as a 'life principle,' take care of itself, satisfied that it is not necessary for the world's good that it 'dominate' anybody or anything.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*THE STATE.*

It is sometimes said that the family is the foundation of the state, and the state the outgrowth of the family. I do not regard this view as correct. Those relationships which make up the state are wider and more universal than those which constitute the family. The state exhibits that organic connection which subsists between man and man as human beings before the special relationship of husband and wife or parent and child arise. Two men, or man and woman, have general rights and duties as respects each other belonging to their character as human beings, to which are added as increments the rights and duties of the family. Family obligations are built upon and are additional to state obligations. Of course the family is the nursery of the citizen; but, on the other hand, the civil order, the state, is the guardian and protector of the family. There must be social union before there is sexual union, and without the latter there is no complete family life, while the former gives the life of the state or community.

Like the family, the state is an aggregation of individuals united by certain organic relationships, whose organisation and whose ends are in no wise different from those of the family. The means, however, of realising those ends are not the same in the case of the state as they are with the family, since the conditions of the relationships are somewhat different. The true idea of the state is of an organic unity, wherein each member is at once the means and the end of all the rest. The end of state action (which I suppose Dr. Littlejohn and his friends would consider to be the individualistic end) is, for reasons given in the preceding chapters, to be regarded as the highest happiness of the greatest number. The means or agencies for carrying out the ends of the state, so far as any organised action is necessary, lie in the government, which exercises whatever restraint and control over individuals the rights of other individuals require. Almost all will agree that some

restraint and control must be maintained, the chief questions of dispute being over the degree, the occasions, and the manner of control.

The state is not a voluntary organisation. Its relationships exist whether we choose or not. They exist in the nature of things. The government is a creature of the wills of men, but the state is not. Given two human beings with the possibility of communication, and there exists a state relationship, which, interpret it and regulate it as we may, cannot be evaded. The natural organic connection may not be fully appreciated, but avoid it we cannot; some sort of theory of this connection is therefore inevitable; and under this some kind of organisation will be attempted.

What I deem to be an entirely legitimate and proper individualism holds that all men are born free and equal as to rights and duties; that all men have certain inalienable rights, the chief of which are life, liberty, and property, to secure which rights governments are instituted and maintained, deriving their just powers from the fact of the organic unity of mankind, and being responsible to the non-governing individuals of the state for their proper exercise. The government is simply an agent, an instrumentality, for the mutual benefit of the whole people, in furthering the ends of the state. While, therefore, the government controls the people, the people ought always to have control of the government to keep it true to the purposes of its existence. As in the case of the family, individualism maintains that, since the state has no existence apart from individuals composing it, the state, *as such*, has no rights, obligations, or ends apart from individuals. Aside from the latter it is an abstraction, the name merely expressing or indicating certain relationships, rights, and duties of individuals toward each other.

On the individualistic theory of the state each person is the ultimate judge of what constitutes his own happiness—that is, he must determine his own ends and the means of attaining them. Hence, liberty is of prime importance where men dwell together, the only restriction being that no man in the use of his liberty shall employ it to another's injury. Interference with the freedom of anyone is only justified where it is necessary for the security of others in their rights. Liberty, equality, and security are thus of transcendent value in the eyes of individualism, and determine how the powers of government should be exercised.

Since these ideas in a great measure underlie the state polity of what are commonly termed free countries, and are recognised as sound doctrine very largely and prevailingly in America, England, and France, at any rate, to go no further, we should not expect to find individualism called upon to plead to any indictment here, except by those who favour absolutism and the divine right of kings. But without stopping to consider at length the latter doctrines, let us see if we can discover any dangers coming from individualistic tendencies in politics, even conceding the truth and the utility of the principles of equal rights. That there are such dangers I am not disposed to deny; and among them are the perils of liberty degenerating into license. It is quite true, as President Seelye in his baccalaureate says, that elevation of liberty above law induces license, which degenerates into anarchy, which issues only in a despotism. Excessive individual egoism, however, produces anarchy as certainly when it is apparent in a monarch, under the sanctions of divine authority, as it does in a democracy. On the other hand, when anarchy prevails the establishment of a despotism is the first step toward the establishment of order, though it should not be inferred from this fact that it is the final step.

The evils and the perils which affect disastrously any social order arise, broadly speaking, either from positive infringement and disregard on the part of some individual of the rights of others, or, negatively, from want of appreciation of one's duty to others. Of course the latter may lead to the former, and the former implies the latter. The former of these two general classes of social evils it is the aim of government and law to prevent; but no method has yet been discovered of compelling by extrinsic force the maintenance of that condition of heart and mind which prompts care and interest in behalf of others as a matter of love and duty. Disturbances of the first class are comprised under the heads of offences against life, liberty, and property, and these are repressed and prevented by governmental instrumentality. Evils of the second class are corrected by what are usually termed moral influences persuading, not compelling save by the force of moral principles.

So far as the form of government is concerned, it is fair to say that, on the whole, individualism is represented by democracy and authority by monarchy and aristocracies. And yet we should not overlook the fact upon which stress was laid in the last chapter,

that authority must be vested in someone, and where it is centred in one or a few with the sanctions of a claimed divine commission, the only result is the most extreme and most dangerous individual exaltation. The evils ensuing have been so great, so terrible, so fatal that the most tremendous struggles have taken place all along the course of history to secure and vindicate the rights of the people. I need do no more than refer to the eternal, irrepressible contest for liberty against despotism, so prominent, so absorbing in all parts of the world and in almost all times, and by no means yet ended. This conflict has always been a rebellion against authority and established institutions by individuals in assertion of what have been claimed to be individual rights. Certainly whatever benefits have ensued to the world from struggles of this sort, individualism and not authority is entitled to the credit. Without such struggles it is clear the better *régime* would not have come. True enough, the conflict in each case was inaugurated by individuals asserting their rights; they doubtless precipitated the strife and whatever ruin accompanied it; but the real cause was the tyrannous pressure of authority and the refusal to allow any modification of existing institutions, however unjust and oppressive, on the plea that whatever is, is right. At any rate, this much we may safely assert, that wherever anarchical tendencies have manifested themselves it has been under the conditions of a class of individuals unduly exalted, whose pre-eminence is supported by some doctrine of 'inherent sacredness.'

These facts being considered, it is manifestly unfair to charge upon democratic individualism the responsibility for revolutionary outbreaks, and that devastation which accompanies attempts to subvert existing institutions by force. At farthest the responsibility is a divided one. Action and reaction are equal and opposite. One side is too aggressive and the other too unyielding. But those who are fond of talking about the inherent sacredness of existing institutions are apt to consider that there is no fault anywhere but in the failure to honour and respect what is divine and unchangeable. The practical result is the upper says to the under, 'Obey, or be crushed.' If obedience is not yielded but resistance is developed, then the advocates of the authority-system ascribe the consequent disturbances of order to the 'evil will.' They are quite right; but the evil will is their own as much as of those who are pointed out as offenders. 'To see far and clearly,' says George Sand, 'is the whole aim of life.' 'The essence of moral energy,'



remarks Henry James, 'is to survey the whole field.' The people I am criticising neither see far nor clearly! nor do they survey the whole field. As Mme. Sand said of Flaubert, they lack 'a distinct and extensive view of life.'

So far as the doctrine of authority militates against democracy and favours the divine right of kings, I presume both President Seelye and Bishop Littlejohn would repudiate it, though probably both of them would discourage insurrection and violence to overthrow monarchy where it now exists, especially with a reasonable degree of security for individual rights. But, to be consistent, I do not see how their principles can fail to lead them to sustain Cæsarism and Popery. To be sure, they will say that a power has a right to rule only so long as it rules righteously. But who, on their ground, is to determine right and wrong. They will answer that these questions are to be settled by those in whom God has reposed the authority to determine and declare. Moses, the law-giver, gave the laws which God announced to him; Moses, the executive, executed God's laws under God's directions. If, therefore, God has once conferred authority upon a governor or class of rulers, the principle of authority requires that they be respected, revered, and obeyed, because they are the divine representatives. They must not even be disputed. To question their decrees or oppose their edicts is to assert the individual will against the moral order. Absolutism is the only safe position to be maintained by those who believe in the inherent sacredness of existing institutions.

It will doubtless be remarked that while the divine authority may be conferred for a time upon a sovereign, it will nevertheless be lost by an unrighteous rule. But certainly the ruler is not likely to admit that his government is iniquitous; and if others proclaim it and seek to reform or overthrow, what is this but an outbreak of individualism? One is reminded of the couplet:—

Treason does never prosper; what's the reason?  
For if it prosper, none dare call it treason.

Practically the believers in the authority-system are forced to reprobate all agitation against an existing order in its inception and initiation; but if it persists and succeeds, then they must like the Mohammedan fatalists exclaim, 'God wills it,' and transfer their allegiance to the new power as a new vicegerent of the All-wise. But if the new *régime* is a righteous one, those efforts

which established it must have been righteous also; if they were, when the next agitation arises who shall say that it may not also be the movement of the spirit of God? What escape from the conclusion that the individual must be the sole judge for himself and act according to the best light he has? Then, pray, what becomes of the principle of authority?

To my mind this dogma of authority has been in the world's history a constant hindrance to progress, and a perpetual opponent of civilisation. Its effect has been to prevent the growth of a better and more complete knowledge, which can come only after questioning and re-examining conclusions already reached and asserted. And in addition to this it has established unyielding barriers to practical reforms, which, by modifying institutions that have ceased to serve any good purpose, or that were originally pernicious, might forestall and prevent violent outbreaks tending to the disruption of society. If people were encouraged to believe that their protests would be heeded, and that there was a possible remedy for their wrongs, real or fancied, short of violence, they would not care to incur the enormous risks of the latter. A *régime* which allows free expression of opinion at all times, and which provides the means for a speedy change of laws which have become obnoxious to the interests of any considerable body of people, will be much less likely to be disturbed by insurrectionary or revolutionary outbreaks than one in which, by reason of beliefs in their 'inherent sacredness,' the laws like those of the Medes alter not. Plato, I think, refers to the true principle when he makes Socrates say in the 'Theætetus,' 'I may affirm also that the breathless calm and stillness and the like are wasting and impairing, and wind and storm preserving.' But surely the gentle breeze, and the strong fresh wind with its refreshing, revivifying power as it stirs all nature to health and growth, is better than the tornado which clears the pestilence-laden air, indeed, but only with cruel and widespread destruction. The truth also is expressed in that other passage of the 'Theætetus,' 'There is no one, or some, or any sort of nature, but out of motion and change and admixture all things are becoming.'

When laws exist they must be obeyed and enforced. They must bear with them that much of authority, and as expressions of the will of the whole for the benefit of all and of each they must be respected. But they are means, not ends; and the moment we attach to them any sentiment which forbids change on account

of other considerations than the mutual interest, they become obstructions to the circulation of the very life-blood of the organism, and impair its utility. And if it happens, as it often does, and frequently in democracies, that liberty is placed above law, the remedy will not be found in claiming that laws have any other purpose than to promote the welfare of individuals, or that the government or the state has any other end; but rather in making more clear and convincing the doctrine that governmental administration is necessitated to secure the greatest happiness of the people, and that this can only be accomplished by obedience to the same order, subject to the right to use all means, short of injury to life, liberty, and property, to change that order if it be deemed itself pernicious.

Conceding the utility of an administration founded upon principles of equal rights, what can the doctrine of authority suggest as likely to cure the ills which come from abuse of individual liberty? Those who believe in the doctrine can say that people ought to respect law more and obey laws better. But that is what individualists say also. Saying so in neither case accomplishes the desired result. In the making of laws individualism would apply the test of utility for the general happiness; authority would legislate according to the dictates of some assumed standard of divine command, which, we have seen, inevitably leads to an exaltation of the individual, more ineradicable and dangerous than that which is caused by mere self-assertion without the support of authority. And where this course has been taken, we also note that it does not prevent social disturbances, but only makes them, when they occur, to be more violent and terrible. Two things, then, we may conclude: that under systems created according to the principle of authority we find only a worse individualism, and that an authority-system does not abate or prevent those offences against society which are laid to the charge of individualistic ideas.

President Seelye has himself stated the truth of the matter in a review article, entitled 'Dynamite as a Factor in Civilisation.'<sup>1</sup> He observes, 'The sources of the danger which now threatens are not new and are not in the dynamite itself. It is not in the weapon, but in the hands which use it; and not in these, but in the hearts which direct them that the real peril is to be found. The choices of men are the root of the whole trouble.' Then he adds a most weighty remark, but one which militates very strongly

<sup>1</sup> *North American Review*, July 1883.

against the dogmas of authority which we often find President Seelye supporting. 'It is quite clear at the outset—human nature remaining as it is—that political problems are not likely to be solved by force and fear alone.' Now upon the doctrine of authority, if right is righteous not because it is right, but because some constituted authority says it is righteous, the government is precisely one which is maintained by force and fear: force on the part of the governors who assert their will because their will is right; fear on the part of the governed, who develop those forms of fear as awe, reverence, regard for inherent sacredness, the absence of which, people like Bishop Littlejohn so bitterly lament as indicating the degeneracy of the times. Any system which does not permit the title of the governing power to be questioned by the governed in the light of what is best for the general happiness is a system of rule by force and fear, disguise it as you may under high-sounding phrases, as 'inherent sacredness,' or 'divine authority.'

Apropos of these remarks, doubtless President Seelye would say that 'the only true means of social safety and strength and growth' is 'in the principle of self-forgetfulness wherein each one pleases not himself, but his neighbour.'<sup>1</sup> I should deem it more accurate to say: wherein each one pleases himself only in pleasing his neighbour; but I will not here quarrel over forms of expression; the idea involved indicates the truth which I have been again and again urging. It is agreed that how best to apply this principle and to accomplish the result sought should be the end of all thought and effort on the part of those who believe in the precept of King Archidamus (of whom Thucydides writes), that 'it is most honourable and most secure for many persons to show themselves obedient to the same order.' Bishop Littlejohn, and those who stand upon his platform, however, have not a clear and distinct notion of the social trouble they seek to remedy. Egoism is the evil, not individualism; and direction of the attention to the latter is only a superficial direction. The root of the evil is the self-centred disposition, which is not to be remedied by setting one man above another. The repression of individualism and the exaltation of institutions advocated by these worthy people means, the abasement of some individuals and the puffing up of others; the servieny of one and the dominancy of another. This will

<sup>1</sup> *North American Review*, *op. cit.*

never cure the body politic; on the contrary, it will make the disease worse and perhaps fatal.

The fact has been that, wherever foresight apprehending evil to come, and seeing the sources of the trouble, has pointed out the way of avoidance, and stimulated efforts toward reform, the doctrines of authority and their institutional supports have invariably stood in the way. Not only direct attempts at change have been opposed, but all suggestion and agitation have been reprobated. If more liberty has been asked for, the cry of insurrection and revolution has been raised, and stern measures of repression have been inaugurated, with the only result of making the insurrection or revolution more certain and more violent, though postponed for a time. Then the awful effects of individual license are held up to the world as a warning, and the necessity of 'outward guides, civil and ecclesiastical,' and of 'institutional checks and limitations,'<sup>1</sup> is emphasised, while the oppression of one individual by another, and the unyielding domination of institutions, which were the real causes of the woe, are entirely ignored.

Men are not thoroughly philanthropic. They are growing more and more so as enlightenment progresses, we must believe, but they are not yet very highly altruistic. It is, then, of the utmost importance for the welfare of the social organism that the very largest opportunity be afforded for the individual's own spontaneity to work out his own destiny. From this it follows that the action of government ought to be restricted to the obtaining and preserving security of individual rights, and to a limited degree in carrying on works of public convenience. 'La sûreté et la liberté personnelle,' said Mirabeau,<sup>2</sup> 'sont les seules choses qu'un être isolé ne puisse s'assurer par lui-même.' Remarks Herbert Spencer:<sup>3</sup> 'I hold, then, that, forced as men in society are to seek satisfaction of their own wants by satisfying the wants of others; and led, as they also are, by sentiments which social life has fostered, to satisfy many wants of others irrespective of their own; they are moved by two sets of forces which, working together, will amply suffice to carry on all needful activities; and I think the facts fully justify this belief. . . . Scarcely any scientific generalisation has, I think, a broader inductive basis than we have for the belief that these egoistic and altruistic feelings are powers which, taken together, amply suffice to originate and carry on all

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Littlejohn.

<sup>2</sup> *Sur l'Éducat. publique.*

<sup>3</sup> 'Specialised Administration,' *Fortnightly Review*, Dec. 1871.

the activities which constitute healthy national life ; the only prerequisite being that they shall be under the negatively-regulative control of a central power—that the entire aggregate of individuals, acting through the legislature and executive as its agents, shall put upon each individual and group of individuals the restraints needful to prevent aggression, direct and indirect.’

It is such truths as these that the disciples of the authority-system are constantly overlooking. Would that they might consider them more thoroughly. Here is another of like import and of like value, in the words of William von Humboldt :<sup>1</sup> ‘ While the state constitution, by the force of law or custom or its own preponderating power, imparts a definite relation to the citizens, there is still another which is wholly distinct from this—chosen of their own free will, infinitely various, and in its nature ever-changing. And it is strictly this last—the mutual freedom of activity among all the members of the nation—which secures all those benefits for which men longed when they formed themselves into a society. The state constitution itself is strictly subordinate to this, as to the end for which it was chosen as a necessary means ; and since it is always attended with restrictions in freedom, as a necessary evil.’

‘ The world is not in danger of returning to ‘ the homelessness and lawlessness of savage life.’ As the social organism becomes more complex, the mutual connection and interdependence of all its parts likewise becomes more close and more necessary. And it must not be forgotten that there is in human nature the primitive pleasure in the pleasure of others before spoken of, a sentiment of sympathy which goes alongside of all antipathies, and never can be wholly extinguished. We must admit, in the language of Adam Smith beginning his treatise on ‘ The Theory of Moral Sentiments,’ that ‘ How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it.’

The conclusions to which we are now brought are, that the state is nothing apart from the individuals composing it ; that legislation for the state itself, aside from those individuals, is not only futile but delusive and dangerous to the peace and order of the community ; that the government is merely the agent of the people in carrying out such measures of organisation and adminis-

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on the Sphere and Duties of Government*, chap. xv.

tration as are necessary for the common weal; and that all state and governmental authority exists solely and exclusively for the end of the highest happiness of the greatest number of *individuals*. Beyond this there is no warrant whatever for the exercise of authority, and for adherence to this canon all governmental administration should at all times be held strictly accountable as a trustee to individual *cestuis que trust*. In the light of this doctrine of the constitution of the state, and the function of government, that individualism which sets one man above another, or which allows one man to infringe upon the rights of another, must be prevented and suppressed. Security to the individual is of the first importance, and when this is obtained the exercise of a great amount of authority on the part of government is infinitely more perilous to the common weal than any unrestricted freedom allowed to individual activity after the rights of others are secured. Above all, we should never allow any ideas of 'inherent sacredness' of existing institutions to interfere with free criticism and exposure of defects, and the agitation and carrying out of such reforms as are needed by changed or changing circumstances.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*THE CHURCH.*

IN the 'Charmides' of Plato occurs the following remarkable passage: '*Soc.* . . But our king Zamolxis, said he, who is also a god, says that, as it is not proper to attempt to cure the eyes without the head, nor the head without the body, so neither is it proper to cure the body without the soul. . . . For all good and evil, said he, whether in the body or in human nature, originate, as he declared, in the soul and flow from thence, as from the head to the eyes; and therefore if the head and the body are to be well, you must begin by curing the soul; that is the first thing.' Wise and good men in all ages have seen that the existence of evil, its continuance, and its source in the egoistic volitions of men, make it necessary to individual and social welfare that some systematic organised effort be made to suppress it by purifying the springs from which it flows; in other words, as Plato enjoins, by curing the soul.

Stripping away all the superstition and eliminating the adventitious, this is the real practical purpose of those organisations which are built upon a religious foundation and for religious ends. Men may be controlled for a time and to a degree by force and fear, but unless their wills are subdued there is no permanent security for the authority. A person may be commanded to do a thing under penalties, and may do it; but vastly superior results can be obtained at a much less expenditure if he can be induced to command himself to do this same thing, and cheerfully to obey his own behests. The government by 'force and fear' is very imperfect and transient at best. The government of self-direction and self-control is the only one that is certain and permanent. Observing that the egoistic impulses are strong naturally, and, if unchecked, tend to destroy moral and social order, men came to ascribe the altruistic disposition, so blessed and beneficent, to a source above nature, working against natural forces. They joined to other attributes of the Divine Being, or Beings they worshipped the



characteristic of love, and came to believe that God would send the Spirit of Love into the hearts of men, turning them first to Him and then filling them with love for God's creatures. In other words, religious and ethical sentiments became united, and produced in theoretical directions a creed, holding that the dispositions of human beings could be changed beneficially by the influx of a supernatural agency, a sort of Divine Force, which could be induced under certain conditions. In practical directions this resulted in organisations for obtaining the results promised by the creed, for curing the souls of men according to the methods approved by this theory.

The ethico-religious organisations combined, and, more or less consolidated (which were the outcoming of the sentiments to which I have been referring), constitute the Church, whose chief and controlling precept, as Dr. Julius Müller styles it, the *ἀνακεφαλαιώσις* of all divine commands to men<sup>1</sup>—is first to love God with all the heart, and secondly to love one's neighbour as one's self. Now, so far as the church visible is concerned, it cannot be denied that it is at least an association of individuals. It is composed of individual men and women united by certain common sentiments and purposes. Unlike the association of the state, that of the church is voluntary. A quibble may be raised here; for it may be said that the church is God's state, and that no one can escape from its obligations: we can no more avoid the divine administration than we can the civil. This may all be true, but it by no means follows that a person, by the fact of his being a man, is therefore a member of every or any church. Of course the absurdity of this is apparent. However the church invisible may be constituted, the visible organisations are all that we can deal with as factors of individual and social development; and membership in these is voluntary, except it may be where church and state are united, and a person is a member of the church as he is a citizen. The sphere of church action is limited only by the life of mankind, individual and social. The bond of church unity is the ever-living desire of man to make men better, higher, nobler; and the determination to subdue all unrighteousness and evil. The idea of the organic unity of mankind, each living for all, and all for each, is the nexus of church union as it is of state union. The methods of church and state action are unlike, but their ends are not radically different. The

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, Book I. chap. i.

church and state express and present only complementary sides of the same idea ; no wonder that men have tried so often practically to unite them. Relatively speaking, state action is negative while church action is positive. The state is cautious, protective, conservative ; the church is zealous, stirring, aggressive ; the state is judicial, the church forensic ; the state is calm, solid, defensive ; the church is impetuous, overwhelming, conquering ; the state is a shield, the church a fierce lance ; the state is a cordon of strong forts, the church is an advancing army terrible with its banners ; the state is the granite mountain or the gnarled oak, the church is the resistless avalanche that sweeps down the side of the one, or the mighty blast that assails the tough firmness of the other ; the state is Argos, the guardian ; the church is Herakles, who slays the Hydra and cleanses the Augean stables ; the state is strength in repose, the church strength in active exercise ; the state destroys its enemies, the church converts them, and adds them to its own ranks ; the state inflicts the penalty, the church takes away the guilt ; the state boes its work by removing all hindrances, by guaranteeing the common freedom, by securing the largest liberty consistent with the liberty of the whole ; the church then takes upon itself the completion of the task, and with its aggressive action warming the heart, stirring the souls of men, everywhere urging to a higher and better life, sending its missionaries abroad, relieving the poor, healing the sick, it goes on its way of conquest by curing men's souls. And ever the church leans upon the protecting arm of the state, while, on the other hand, the state ever draws vitality and inspiration from the church. The organisations of both are organisations of individuals, maintained by individuals for the benefit of individuals, bound together by the fact of the organic interdependence of mankind.

Certainly no reasonable objection can be offered to the ends of a society existing for the purpose of curing the souls of men, so as to make them derive their chief happiness from the happiness of others. This is what all the wise and good desire. The only questions which can arise are as to the fidelity of such societies to their work and their effectiveness in accomplishing it. Now, in opposition to Bishop Littlejohn and President Seelye, I shall venture to claim that just so far as the church has been an active philanthropic institution, teaching that holiness consists in helpfulness, and, by its teachings and its active ministrations, working for the great end of the improvement and happiness of the greatest

number of individuals, so far has it been a benefit to society. But in so far as it has attempted to impose upon the world or upon individuals any system of authority, either as to belief or action, and so far as it has adopted or inculcated other ends than the happiness of mankind, so far has it been baneful in its influences, damaging to moral character, and an enemy to the community at large.

We have now arrived, I fancy, at the central point of the solicitude which is exhibited by thinkers of the type of those I have been instancing about this subject of Individualism. The truth is that individualism, if allowed here, will inevitably destroy their system; and this system, they think (I believe wrongly), is of more importance to mankind than anything else. They consider that the salvation of both the individual and the race, here and hereafter, depends upon its supremacy. Consequently they are filled with alarm at any exhibition of a growing individualism in the family and the state, in opinion or in action, wherever it may appear, seeing the ultimate danger to the ecclesiastical system if it be not restrained. Their religious and theological beliefs not only colour but determine their moral and social philosophy, their politics, and all their ideas of family and state association. Those beliefs undeniably favour a system of authority, and granting that ecclesiastical authority as upheld by bishops and doctors of divinity is of the importance that they claim, they do well to be jealous of the pretensions and the encroachments of the prevailing individualism. This is Bishop Littlejohn's lament:—'Anarchical and destructive as may be the notions touching the family and the state now propagated by the advanced schools of individualism, the full extent of their wild and pernicious tendency crops out only when we consider their bearing on the church, the foremost of the institutions commissioned of God for the education and redemption of man. It is here that they open up chasms in the immemorial tradition of catholic truth that may well startle us, and compel us to ask, whereunto these things may grow.'

In opposition to these destructive tendencies of the times Bishop Littlejohn preaches the doctrine that the church is 'absolutely of God, not of man.' 'Through all the ages it has been doing its appointed work, has had its creed, its ordinances, its worship, its priesthood. There have been no changes in its essential elements save such as have grown out of and corresponded with God's own successive dispensations, God's own advancing

revelations of "the mystery of godliness." Patriarchs, prophets, lawgivers, kings have been its ministers, and all of them were called and sent of God, not of man.' Moreover, in the ends for which the church was instituted, 'the individual soul, so far from being its chief, is always its secondary object. In all its functions it was needful that it should be the master, if, in any, it was to be the servant of man. In none is it amenable to man, in all it is responsible to God. It is impossible to study the ends for which the church exists, as they are set forth in revelation, without seeing that it has ends which immensely transcend the interests of mortals, and which, antedating the foundation of the world, will outlast its dissolution.'

We are not definitely told what these ends are which so 'immensely transcend the interests of mortals.' We are informed generally and vaguely that they are the establishment of Christ's supremacy in heaven and earth, the glory of God, and the like, the specific nature of which Bishop Littlejohn does not pretend to know. But, at all events, no one will venture to dispute the assertion that so far as our vision goes these ends, whatever they are, are being worked out in human beings and through human activities of individuals in a social organism. We know what the effects of these activities are upon human beings and their relations; we do not know what their effects are beyond these. We have a law commanding us to love God and to love our neighbour. We are able to determine what love to one's neighbour consists in. As to what constitutes love to God, we can either affirm that it is measured by love to man, or that it is to be defined and declared, even in opposition to ethical law, by some man, body of men, or institution, acknowledged as the revealer and interpreter of God's will. In the latter case it may happen, as everyone knows it often has happened, that conduct has been justified as God's law which, according to principles of altruistic morality, is wholly unjustifiable. We thus have the spectacle of men acting under the first commandment, as they suppose, namely, Love God, while they are certainly acting in disobedience of the second, Love Man. The two parts of the revealed law of God are hence made to stand in contradiction to each other, and chaos results at once in our determinations of moral duties. The moment we depart from a rule of belief and action which gauges the right and wrong of conduct by the principle of utility to the greatest number, that moment we are at any rate opening the door to the entrance within the social

organism of forces liable to work against that organic integrity according to which each part is at once the means and end of all the rest.

It will doubtless be said that even if this be true, sad though it be, we cannot help it. God's ways are not our ways ; His purposes are not our purposes ; His work immensely transcends the interests of mortals. It is enough that He has revealed His will in the Scriptures, and has established His priesthood and His church as an authority to men to be heeded, followed, and obeyed by all, however human interests may seem to be affected. But what are we to do when there exists a great number of organisations each of which claims that it is the sole or the superior authority ? This difficulty has frequently been suggested and often been evaded, but never has been fairly met and overcome. From the nature of things it cannot be overcome so long as this heterogeneity continues ; and we can see not the slightest prospect of uniformity. These fatal objections to the claims of any church to dominate by reason of an inherent authority are well set forth and fully discussed by George Cornewall Lewis in ' *An Essay on the Influence of Authority in Matters of Opinion.*' He shows, in a chapter on Authority in questions of religion, that there exists in Christendom no agreement as to what is true doctrine, or what is the teaching of the church with regard to religious truth ; no consentience as to what organisation is apostolic or catholic, nor as to the marks of the true church, nor even as to the correct interpretation of the Scriptures. The conclusion which he reaches is the following :— ' The practical deduction from these results seems to be, that the mere authority of any church or sect cannot of itself reasonably command assent to its distinctive and peculiar tenets, while the present divisions of Christendom continue ; and that a person born in a christian country can only with propriety adopt one of two alternatives : viz., either to adhere to the faith of his parents and predecessors, and that of the church in which he has been educated, or, if he is unwilling to abide by this creed, to form his own judgment as to the choice of his sect by means of the best independent investigation which his understanding and opportunities for study enable him to make.' This, of course, is rank individualism ; but, since things are as they are, what other conclusion is left for us ?

For the reasons just given I shall not consider in this discussion the supernatural relations of the church, but only its humanitarian

aspects. When theological professors and doctors of divinity, after lifetimes of study and labour, confess themselves unable to produce any unanimity of belief as to the location, the justice, and the extent of authority in the church, it certainly could not be expected of me that I should contribute anything in aid of such a result, even though I were to enter upon a thorough examination of the respective claims of the Roman Church, the Greek Church, the Church of England, the Dissenting Churches, and the thousand and one other denominations and sects of the religious world. I shall, therefore, assume the position on the religious side that the measure of love to God is solely love to man. More than one eminent religious teacher has taken this ground, and it is maintained by highly respectable religious organisations. I do not see how any harmonising of science and religion with reference to morality can ever be effected on any other basis, but on this platform the two may meet and join hands. There is a complete agreement as to principles, the only room for difference being in their applications.

I cannot avoid suggesting to theologians and churchmen who prate about the ends of the church immensely transcending the interests of mortals, that it would after all be just as religious if they left the Almighty to take care of those ends Himself, especially as it is admitted nothing is known about them. Probably they will not be neglected, but will be carried out just as perfectly if bishops and other clergy are not so anxious about them. Since men have only an imaginative idea of what the glory of God requires beyond the sphere of human relations, and there is no agreement as to what sort of human conduct is demanded to subserve these ends apart from human social morality, and since altruism is clearly and distinctly enjoined by Scripture authority as one of the two greatest precepts of religious life, is not our duty to God better performed by confining our thoughts and our interests to the sphere which the Almighty has Himself established and limited for human knowledge and action? However much we may think and talk about the transcendental, our activity, though we may seem to direct it beyond, inevitably spends itself and its whole force upon ourselves or other men. Mankind and the finite world is the limit of human effort so far as we can see. Should not the laws of the social organism, therefore, be all-controlling in settling the righteousness and the wrong of human conduct?

The position which those who are not professional supporters

of some particular theological system must maintain with regard to the church is, I conceive, that it is an organisation of individuals united in the aim of curing the souls of men to make them more altruistic, to teach them holiness through helpfulness, and that whatever divine warrant the church possesses lies in this aim; whatever divine approval it has comes from its fidelity to these ends, and its success in achieving them. In such a view its theology is immaterial, except so far as it may be shown to have practical effects, good or bad, upon the altruistic purpose. If, for instance, such theology requires human sacrifices, the less we have of it the better; if, on the other hand, its doctrines inculcate love as that trait of human character most pleasing to the Divine Being inasmuch as God is Love, the more we have of the like the more beneficial will be the result. More attention must hence be paid to the morality of dogmas. We have no knowledge and hence no science of the supernatural. All we can predicate of this world beyond is conjectural; our visions of it are fictions of the imagination. Our hypotheses and speculations must therefore be so regulated and controlled that our ideals of Beauty, Truth, and Goodness when formed shall favour moral conduct and social morality. The dogmas of the church do not always lead up to this result; the doctrine of sin and atonement through the blood of Christ, for instance, we have seen to be a hideously immoral doctrine. Creeds may be necessary, but if they are to be taught, society has a right to say that they shall not be immoral in their tendencies; if they are, the church supporting them must expect criticism, disfavour, and condemnation.

As I have before indicated, I quite believe (and rejoice in this belief) that individualism will destroy the ecclesiastical system represented by Bishop Littlejohn and President Seelye. It seems to me that its vitality is well nigh gone already. But if anyone laments its decadence from a dread of this growing individualism, let me remind him that no less in the church than in the family and the state does authority necessitate the most pronounced and most aggravated form of individual domination. The same situation exists in the spiritual as in the temporal realm, with precisely the same results. The creation of a class esteemed superior to others because of divine favour is the very essence of an ecclesiastical authority. And in both cases it means death to the organism. Growth is obstructed and disintegrating forces complete their work. In the case of the church, the priesthood assumes to declare

what is true and false, and to decree what is right and wrong, by virtue of its authority. The logical outcome of their claims, which they always press to the fullest extent when they dare, is that they are infallible interpreters of truth and guides of action, against whom individual judgment and opinion is entitled to no consideration. This is precisely what Bishop Littlejohn's thought clings to when he deplores that fact, that under the influences of the present times, 'the Christian priesthood instead of being constituted and commissioned of God—a veritably Divine ambassadorship from the Court of Heaven, sinks into a function that has no higher origin than the instinct or necessity which leads all human societies to provide for an orderly subdivision of labour.' The papal doctrine of infallibility is the only self-consistent position for those who believe in authority, and that this is the most unrestrained form of individualism needs no argument.

If the church would aid in promoting altruism it must teach men to learn what is true and to do what is right. In regard to the first of these offices, the evident tendency of authority is to repress the search after truth. For authority assumes that what it declares is true beyond cavil, and that to doubt its declarations is not only useless but sinful. In the church this assumption has gone so far as to interfere with and oppose even the progress of physical science. The mind of every reader will revert to Galileo and Bruno as a signal confirmation of the correctness of my assertion; and their cases are not isolated. In metaphysics and philosophy, at the present time, the church constantly insists on its right to dictate what is true and false. A considerable portion of Bishop Littlejohn's sermons is taken up with setting forth an authoritative philosophy and theology. In biology we have only to notice the great outcry which has been made against the doctrine of evolution on the ground that it is opposed to the biblical account of the origin of man. The result of these claims of church authority has been to retard incalculably the progress of knowledge and thus of civilisation. Not only error had to be combated, but intolerance also. The first question that arose with regard to any alleged discovery in science was, What are its bearings upon theology and religion? And the youth were instructed that the source and end of all learning was religion itself. This is such an old story in the world's history that I need not repeat it. But I desire to impress upon all the fact that this obstructiveness to the progress of knowledge has not departed from the church at the



present date, however much it may have been modified from the time when people were imprisoned for promulgating heterodox cosmogonies. The attitude of the clergy toward the doctrine of evolution is sufficient proof of this. Their determined opposition to the secularisation of our schools is another example in point. We must first find out what the church authority says on the given subject; then, if permission be given, we may consider the truth and error involved, in the light of this concession.

The fatal difficulty with the establishment of truth by authority is its impossibility. A proposition is only true to him who believes it. When doctrines are promulgated they are addressed to individual minds, and their force and effectiveness depend upon that belief. But people cannot be made to believe by commanding them to believe. In order that a proposition be true it must conform to experience; he that believes must judge it to be true according to his own experience. This, however, is not a voluntary matter at all. His beliefs are not as he chooses them to be. If they were it would be destructive of the very idea of truth, which is of something objective and permanent, quite beyond the control of individual choice. Inasmuch as I have elsewhere discussed the subject of belief at length, and endeavoured to show its nature and the manner in which beliefs are formed,<sup>1</sup> I shall not here endeavour to prove what I have just said by psychological analysis, but will instead enforce my assertion by a quotation from Samuel Bailey, who justly observes,<sup>2</sup> 'Threats and torments would be in vain employed to compel a geometrician to dissent from a proposition in Euclid. He might be compelled to assert the falsity of the proposition, but all the powers in the universe could not make him believe what he thus asserted. In the same way no hopes nor fears, no menaces, no allurements could at all affect a man's belief in a matter of fact which happened under his own observation. The remark is also true of innumerable facts which we have received on the testimony of others. That there have been such men as Cæsar and Cicero, Pope and Newton, and that there are at present such cities as Paris and Vienna, it is impossible to believe by any effort of the will. . . . It will, perhaps, be generally granted that decided belief or decided disbelief, when once engendered in the mind, cannot be affected by volition. This influence is usually placed in the middle region of suspense

<sup>1</sup> *System of Psychology*, chap. xxxvi. 'Knowledge and Belief.'

<sup>2</sup> *Essay on the Formation of Opinions*.

and doubt, and it is supposed that, when the understanding is in a state of fluctuation between two opinions, it is in the power of the will to determine the decision. The state of doubt, however, will be found to be no more subject to the will than any other state of the intellect. All the various degrees of belief and disbelief, from the fullest conviction to doubt and from doubt to absolute incredulity, correspond to the degree of evidence or to the nature of the considerations present to the mind. To be in doubt is to want that degree or kind of evidence which produces belief; and while the evidence remains the same without addition or diminution, the mind must continue in doubt. The understanding, it is clear, cannot believe a proposition on precisely the same evidence as that on which it previously doubted it, and yet to ascribe to mere volition a change from doubt to conviction is asserting that this may take place; it is affirming that a man without the slightest reason may, if he please, believe to-day what he doubted yesterday. . . . To affect his belief you must affect the subject of it by producing new arguments or considerations. . . . You can alter perceptions only by altering the thing perceived. Every man's consciousness will tell him that the will can no more modify the effect of an argument on the understanding than it can change the taste of sugar to the palate or the fragrance of a rose to the smell; and that nothing can weaken its force, as apprehended by the intellect, but another argument opposed to it.' <sup>1</sup>

Though it be conceded that we cannot by a direct effort of volition change our beliefs, it is also quite evident that we can modify them indirectly through our interests and purposes formed upon them. When, therefore, we are asked to believe anything upon authority; having respect for this authority, an interest either of fear or hope of benefit is aroused which creates a disposition to place the authority above our own convictions of truth. What is the ultimate effect of this? Precisely what Locke says in the following passage, from Book Fourth of the 'Essay on the Human Understanding,' <sup>2</sup> quoted also by Bailey. 'As knowledge,' observes the Great Master, 'is no more arbitrary than perception; so I think assent is no more in our power than knowledge. When the agreement of any two ideas appears in our minds, whether immediately or by the assistance of reason, I can no more refuse to perceive, no more avoid knowing it than I can avoid seeing those objects which I turn my eyes to and look on in daylight:

<sup>1</sup> Section 2.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. xx.

and what upon full examination I find the most probable I cannot deny my assent to. But though we cannot hinder our knowledge where the agreement is once perceived, nor our assent where the probability manifestly appears upon due consideration of all the measures of it; *yet we can hinder both knowledge and assent by stopping our inquiry, and not employing our faculties in the search of any truth.*<sup>1</sup> This is the only way we can receive truth upon authority exclusively. We must stop our inquiry and turn our attention to something else, questioning no more and doubting no more. That such an habit is inimical to the progress of knowledge is patent.

But the evil does not stop here. With regard to many things and with many persons mental inquiry and examination cannot be prevented. Such investigation, and the consequent reasoning upon the data obtained, often issue in conclusions opposed to those put forth and maintained by authority. An intellectual dishonesty inevitably follows. The person who finds himself in this predicament must smother his convictions, if he supports the authoritative directions. He must profess to believe what he does not believe. He must try to deceive himself, and must succeed in deceiving others, else his reputation suffers. When called upon to defend his positions he must continually strive to make the worse appear the better reason. That this is the exact situation of many people in the church at the present day, with respect to the creeds, cannot be doubted. Such a condition is demoralising in the extreme, both to the persons who force themselves to this hypocrisy and to all upon whom their influence flows.

It may be objected that much of our knowledge we are obliged to take upon authority; that the testimony of others must be accepted both in regard to facts and inferences from facts; that we must believe the conclusions of those who have been able to give the subject the study we could not, or who are by nature better fitted than ourselves to deal with the matter in question. This no one can well dispute; but it must be borne in mind that whatever we accept on authority in this way is received because of a genuine confidence that, had we the opportunity to verify the assertions made, we should find them true. We accept the investigations of others in place of our own. Moreover, the dictum of authority here runs in this wise: 'We offer this to you as truth with the full liberty to verify the conclusion, dispute it, overthrow

<sup>1</sup> Italics mine.

it if you can. It is true because we have thoroughly tested and proved it, and we challenge anyone to disprove it.' Now, the authority which Bishop Littlejohn advocates declares: 'We announce this to you as truth. We are better able than you to judge of truth, and after examination we are satisfied and declare these conclusions. You must receive them because we have thus declared them. Investigation by you for the purpose of testing or proving is wholly unnecessary and irrelevant. You must accept our authority without question.' The vast difference between a scientific and a religious authority is thus made clear. The one favours the ascertainment and the confirmation of truth by stimulating investigation and encouraging doubt, through which alone scientific knowledge can be obtained. The other represses the search after truth, and creates the most favourable conditions for the perpetuation of error. Men are not infallible even in regard to religious doctrine; changes in creeds have been frequent in the church; old ideas and old interpretations of Scripture have repeatedly given place to new. As we have already remarked, there is no agreement even in essentials; indeed, it is by no means settled what essentials are. Errors have admittedly crept into the church doctrinal creeds. Authority would have continued them to this day. Such being the case, why hold on to a principle which has been shown in the church itself to have been an obstacle in the way of attaining what the church now cherishes as true, and which was powerful in sustaining what the church now discards as error?

I should be very sorry to believe that there exists any necessity for arguing the utility of truth in the work of curing the soul. People must have some sort of intellectual foundation for their actions, and if that foundation is the insecurity of error, the whole character is insecurely established. If the young are to be educated to do the truth, they must also know the truth. If men are to be made better, they must, at any rate, know what is the better way. I grant that this is not sufficient, but it is a prerequisite, at least. Knowledge is the lamp to guide our feet. To walk in darkness were small profit. If we walk at all we must have the light, and we ought to have, if possible, the clearest and the best light.

Equally prejudicial is the doctrine of authority to the purposes of making men do what is right. This follows inevitably from the considerations just advanced. In order to do the right, people

must know good from evil. If the search for truth is repressed, the attainment of truth is rendered more uncertain, and the inculcation of error is made both more feasible and more general. Hence the influence upon altruistic sentiments at large, so far as their growth and development are concerned, is injurious. Instead of quickening and vivifying, it blights and kills.

So far as the altruistic disposition is concerned, authority certainly is of no benefit to those in whom the authority is vested. It does not enlarge the sympathies to have power. Especially is this the case where with the power goes the belief in a degree of infallibility. If it is felt by anyone that his position as an oracle or as a divinely appointed priest gives to him a just pre-eminence exempting his dicta from challenge or opposition, when opposition is made or doubt expressed, intolerance at once arises. As before remarked, investigation is irrelevant. The one who ventures to dispute the claims of the divine representative is fit only to be crushed and consigned to hell fire. That intolerance which in the history of the church and state has issued in so many religious wars would never have been possible were it not for this pernicious sentiment of authority over and above intrinsic value as determined by utility. It has been the worst enemy that altruism has had. It may be true that those in authority often do the works of charity and mercy; but those acts are done usually as the bounty of a sovereign is conferred, because it pleases him for his own glory's sake to have pity on the humble, not because the latter are esteemed to have any right to such bounty, unless on the feudal theory of protection in return for fealty. And wherever the right of private judgment and action is maintained against the authority, altruistic dispositions cease, and antipathy has full sway. This is well illustrated in theories of punishment which are held by those who sustain the authority-dogma. They say that punishment is not for the reformation of the criminal, nor yet for the sake of example and deterrent effects; but it is for the vindication of the authority of the sovereign. Such a notion leaves out all altruistic considerations, and substitutes for them a doctrine which would both allow and justify the most heartless and malignant cruelty. If the individual refuses to accept the declaration of authority as to what is right, then he becomes a rebel, and must be punished, not to reform him or to benefit the community by way of example, but to vindicate authority. Should the mandates of authority be wrong, as has so often happened, there is room for

the most monstrous injustice, untempered by any mercy. That this has actually occurred in the history of religious sects needs neither demonstration nor even illustration. The selfishness of the priesthood has been just in proportion to the extent to which their claims of authority have been allowed to go unchecked. Their sense of responsibility to men is weakened or destroyed; and while deluding others, and often themselves—no doubt with the belief that they are responsible to God only, and are obeying His behests—they give a loose rein to their own evil self-will.

Egoism begets egoism. The selfish man is not a good practical teacher of unselfishness. It is of little use to urge the command, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself,' when the one preached to sees that the preacher does not himself obey the mandate. Jesus of Nazareth undoubtedly taught this, and always kept the truth in prominent view as the sum and substance of ethical and religious law. A self-denying character in the teacher is of more importance than his reiteration to others of the precept. So far forth, then, as the principle of authority develops in the superior position egoistic dispositions, it also tends to create a counteractive egoism among those in an inferior class.

Moreover, the enforcement of precepts by authority depends upon fear. It is not the inward prompting of free desire to do the right that follows upon a command, obedience to which is required without question because the mandate comes with authority. No living, growing disposition toward righteousness is generated by force and fear. The latter produce just those sentiments and just that character which makes it necessary and desirable to 'cure the soul.' It is sympathy and not antipathy, love and not hate, which impels men to do what they ought. They may indeed be compelled to outward compliance and ostensible obedience; but that is not what is sought. The problem of the church is to change the inward disposition. The smallest acquaintance with the operation of human mental faculties reveals the impossibility of accomplishing this by any authoritative decrees. President Seelye preaches that we love God because He first loved us, and without our love inspired by Him there is no sound and healthy character. The impulse to right action thus must be a force within, not an extrinsic power moving from without—the still small voice, not the thunders of Sinai. If, then, we declare to men that they must obey a precept, not because they in their own individuality wish to obey, but because it is commanded that

they obey under pains and penalties, we make no more progress towards securing altruistic conduct than we do under the state system, with precisely the same objections that exist in the case of the state against attempting to regulate the positive welfare of the citizen. People cannot be compelled by extrinsic authority to love their neighbours as themselves, whether that authority be state administration of law or the decrees of a priesthood in the church.

The natural counteractive to that undue exaltation and domination of the individual which always comes with any system of authority is no less applicable to the church than to the family and the state. I mean the concession of equal liberty to all individuals. The church is not the guardian and protector of rights; its office is not one which admits of the exercise of positive authority except through the instrumentality of the state. Its compulsions are moral, not legal. Its aim is not to repress evil action by force, but by curing the soul in taking away the desire to do wrong. Its purpose is educational, and its methods persuasive. With such ends the only individualism which can be at all dangerous in the constitution of the organisation is just this individualism of authority. In learning and in preaching the truth, the best safeguard against error lies in the widest liberty to question, test, and dispute. That which is true will survive doubt, and in the multitude and in the activity of the seekers after truth there is the most sure guaranty that the truth will be reached. If the best methods of curing the soul have been fully discovered, there is no need of any extrinsic support in authority; and if they have not been found out completely, it is of the utmost consequence that the search after them should in every way be stimulated. Truth is truth because it is truth, not because anybody says it is truth; and if it be truth it will stand any and all tests.

In the attainment of that which is true and right, therefore, no possible danger can arise from complete freedom of individual investigation, question, and assertion, provided this freedom is complete and universal. In the practical work of amelioration, there may be needed to a degree the restraints upon individual action which all organisation for specific ends necessitates, but there ought always to be preserved in the constitution of the society facilities for the expression of individual ideas as to the methods employed and their effects, and for accomplishing changes in those methods when they do not subserve the true ends of the church. The test

of success ought always to be efficiency in instruction and helpfulness. In order to secure and preserve such efficiency, church societies must be subjected to individual criticism, and must submit themselves to the ordinary laws of social organisations. If they are successful in curing men's souls, so as to develop or increase altruism in the community, they will stand; if not, they must give place to something better. They exist for the benefit of individuals, and to individuals forming the social organism they must ever be held responsible.

It is not doubtful, to my mind at least, that all the vitality of the christian church for good has depended upon the maintenance of this view of its constitution and offices. Jesus of Nazareth in sending forth his disciples to preach the word and to spread abroad the knowledge of himself and his teachings, laid the foundation for the present christian church societies. These were requisite for the establishment, the consolidation, the preservation of gospel truths, and for the development and increase of the altruistic life in any considerable number of individuals. He did not lay down stringent laws in regard to membership in those societies, or impose conditions of fellowship between the societies. Least of all did he demand adhesion to any doctrine. It was evidently intended that the constitution of the churches should adapt itself to changing circumstances. Such, indeed, has been the actual result. Forms of government have varied with varying conditions; and it is noticeable that, as in the state so in the church, democratic principles have been gaining ground. Of course it was always demanded of novitiates that they support the organisation, labour earnestly in its behalf, seek to build it up, and carry out its objects; but beyond this the founder of christianity did not legislate or decree. What he sought was a unity of purpose and will, not of means and method. Jesus himself was not dogmatic. By this statement we are to understand, not that he laid down no rules, laws, or precepts, but that he never brought out a connected body of logical doctrine. If he had done so he would have better pleased the scribes and lawyers. By omitting to do so he very effectually undermined their power. A set of logical tenets is adapted only to those who are in a position to see the premises, and being used to the form of reasoning have intellect enough to follow the steps to the conclusion. A collection of declarations will not impress itself upon those who have not had the range of thought and experience, out of which those declarations grew. A peasant may take the authority of a church



as to doctrines, and confess belief through a feeling of fear or awe, when he knows nothing of the import of those doctrines, or of the manner in which they are made authoritative. Jesus did not encourage such methods; He sought to develop the germs of life in each one according to the knowledge and habit of thought of that individual, and by so doing he made religion a part of a man's life, not an exoteric imposition upon him. The best teachers have always observed the advantage of this plan. Sometimes an internal development, occurring surely and silently, assimilating to itself, has at last become powerful and triumphant in the face of the very strongest restraints from without. Christianity has mainly grown in this way, and tyrants have often been astonished to find it stronger than before, after they have prohibited it, banished its adherents or put them to torture, and thought themselves to have extirpated the obnoxious growth. This kind of organic development was what Jesus laboured to promote. It may be said, to be sure, that he taught with authority and not as the scribes, setting himself up as the very foundation of the new religion. This is true; but even if we are disposed to regard this as a weakness, there is a reason for it in view of the fact that in his time and under his circumstances he could not otherwise have made any impression. The Jews were looking for a king, and the Messiah must needs have assumed authority to have drawn men unto him. But, though using authority to assert the dignity of his mission, the whole spirit of his teaching was individualistic. If followed out along its natural lines of development its tendency was to abate authority as the altruistic life grew in individuals. It substituted individual self-government for extrinsic compulsions, and aimed to secure this substitution as one of its principal ends. Sometimes, but rarely, Jesus seemed to rely upon force and fear; but only for an exigency. He sometimes required obedience of his followers upon the score of his own authority, but only to secure in them the growth through obedience to a more perfect self-control. On the whole it seems evident that the radical altruistic disposition was what he sought for the individual, and, for the social organism, a complete altruistic freedom. Though he called himself a king, he was willing to die for sinners.

No doubt the early christians, for the sake of self-preservation, were obliged to enforce among the members of their organisations a degree of uniformity in life and in expressed beliefs that would seem to give a colour to the claims with regard to the primitive

church of those who preach the authority-system. It was a matter of physical life and death to the churches that they keep their compact form, and present an unbroken front to temporal as well as spiritual enemies. But they made the mistake of permanently subordinating the attainment of the altruistic life in individuals to the growth and permanence of an ecclesiastical organisation. How did they get on? The latter waxed complicated and powerful, while the former was dwarfed, minimised, and well-nigh extirpated. Hence arose that horrible domination of ecclesiasticism which the papal system brought upon the world, and which carried the professed followers of Jesus about as far as was possible from the teachings of their Master.

The church then became an organisation which, unless reformed and purified, must in the interests of social order, justice, and peace, have been swept from the face of the earth. It was reformed, however, through individualistic efforts urging and vindicating the principles of individualism. Religious freedom was the rallying cry of the movement, and, as exemplified in the German Reformation, the sentiments of the reformers toward greater liberty were largely concentrated upon the end of maintaining the freedom of each believer to interpret for himself the word of God. From that time forth the prevailing current of the forces affecting the church has been to disintegrate by differentiation. Uniformity has appeared of less consequence, and heterogeneity has prevailed. The great organisations have been more readily broken in upon, and their power and influence have been materially curtailed. Independent societies have everywhere sprung up, each claiming to be as much representative of the divine purposes as any other. I suppose Bishop Littlejohn deploras this; but to me it seems to have been the salvation of all that is good in the church. Its certain result has been to lessen the domination of the individual—the bishop, the priest, and the deacon—and thereby to remove the great obstacle to the progress of altruism which an organised priesthood always presents. The world generally has been immeasurably the gainer, though various abstractions have suffered and the selfishness of the clergy has been restrained. Individualism, which means aristocracy in the government, and uniformity sought to be gained by the supremacy of a few and obedience to their mandates, has, indeed, nearly been the ruin of the church by destroying its efficiency for good, and often making it an instrument of injustice, persecution, and inhumanity; but it is the truer

and better individualism, which demands freedom for all individuals to think, to criticise, and to act untrammelled by any 'inherent sacredness,' which maintains democracy in the government, and which requires altruism of all, high or low, that has preserved the church, and will ever save it, if saved it is to be. And I am wholly unable to see how a 'christian priesthood' is any less 'constituted and commissioned of God' or any less 'a veritably divine ambassadorship from the Court of Heaven,' if both its origin and its authority *are* derived from 'the instinct or necessity which leads all human societies to provide for an orderly subdivision of labour.' It seldom seems to occur to 'christian philosophers,' that God may conceivably work in and through nature, and that circumstances which create a necessity or give life to an instinct may be as truly providential and as truly accordant with the divine plans and methods as the utterances and declarations of a church council.

The conclusion to which we are forced is that there is even less danger in the case of the church to be apprehended from what Bishop Littlejohn and his friends mean by 'Individualism' than there is in the family and in the state. This individualism is only subversive of a far more dangerous and deleterious manifestation of individualism, and has, besides, a direct tendency to promote that freedom of thought and inquiry needed to secure more light, to attain the self-development in liberty which is essential to self-control, which is the beginning and the *sine qua non* for altruistic conduct. And, on the other hand, we are quite persuaded of the truth and force of the remarks of John Greenleaf Whittier, which Bishop Littlejohn quotes in a note, as an instance of the audacity of individualistic thought. These are golden words :

'EVERYTHING VALUABLE TO THE SOUL HAS ITS CORRESPONDING NEED IN THE SOUL. AUTHORITY AS A GROUND AND ELEMENT OF RELIGION MUST WHOLLY DISAPPEAR. THE TEACHINGS OF CHRISTIANITY WILL BE ON THE NEEDS OF MAN, AND THE CLAIMS FOR CHRIST WILL BE BASED ON THE PERFECT CHARACTER OF HIS LIFE AND TEACHINGS, AND NOT ON HIS AUTHORITY.'<sup>1</sup>

I sincerely hope that in the discussion which I now bring to a close, I have shown patience with bishops and doctors of divinity. I have endeavoured to be both respectful and fair. It is not easy to argue with people and educate them at the same time. Indeed, so far as the bishops and doctors of divinity are concerned, I

<sup>1</sup> *N. S. Times*, October 4, 1880.

certainly should not expect to educate them. They deem it sufficient, in reply to criticism, to iterate and reiterate the doctrines and arguments they learned in their youth; and to attempt to teach them anything new would be like attempting to instruct a *struldbrug* of upwards of a century. But, at the same time, we cannot avoid a reverence for those living among us, who from the progress of the world have been left as anachronisms. Provided it does not make us more tender of their opinions, this is commendable. Certainly, though destructive criticism is necessary, it need not obliterate personal respect, and if it be respectful to the persons, it is generally and more justly entitled to weight, and is productive of better results. Men are not always obtuse when we think them to be, even if they are incapable of changing their opinions. If we find it necessary to pass strictures upon those whose expressions have received great weight and high respect, it should be done in the humility of searchers for truth who will be bold and unsparing in criticism if occasion require it, but yet reverent in spirit toward the men who have spent their lives in building up the temples which, having served their purpose, are passing into decay. Noble thinkers and workers have given their energy to the propagation of ideas and measures which, though well in their season, belong to the civilisation of buried centuries. The victory of their cherished ideas might, indeed, have been the triumph of truth; but as the tide swept on it sought new channels and left them behind, as the changeful river, cutting through the yielding sands, leaves the town on its banks an inland city. Their glory hence becomes a glory of the past, but not the less a real glory, though in the march of progress they are left behind. It is not an uncommon spectacle to see in our great cities some building, an old landmark, a relic of departed magnificence, after it has filled its place for years, and perhaps been a pride and boast, at last yield to the hammers of the workmen, who, caring naught for the sacred associations, ruthlessly and remorselessly knock one brick from another until no vestige of its unity remains; but when from the chaotic mass of ruins there arises the granite warehouse or the marble palace, who will not say that rightly the dust returned to dust and justly the old gives place to the new? So also with the edifices reared by the human mind. So, too, indeed, with human existence itself. When fate has wrought its will by us, we, too, give way, and our time for departure has come. Wise and good men so situated we see often, and among

bishops and doctors of divinity too, men of silver hair, whose life is in the past, who appear to have nothing in common with the destructive to-day, but upon whom we look as upon messengers from a distant land, men whose hopes lie 'beyond the baths of all the western stars;' about whom plays the light which seems to us the mellow radiance of the setting sun, to them the auroral flash of a brighter dawn. They have done their work. It is for us, indeed, to criticise that work, but we are also privileged to honour the workers. By-and-bye, perhaps, others will do the same for the newer achievements of to-day. Little comfort there may be in thus seeing the fondest idols of our creation broken in pieces. Yet though human means all the time be failing, and man's work all the time crumbling into ruin, 'out of motion, and change, and admixture' all things spring in never-ceasing and still advancing evolution. The flower fades, the fruit ripens, the seed falls to the ground, but from it springs a fairer flower and a richer fruit.

If ye lay bound upon the wheel of change,  
And no way were of breaking from the chain,  
The heart of boundless being is a curse,  
The soul of things fell Pain.

Ye are not bound ! The soul of things is sweet,  
The heart of being is celestial rest ;  
Stronger than woe is will ; that which was Good,  
Doth pass to Better—Best.



PART V.

THE SOCIALISTIC FALLACY.

“Society is a growth, not a manufacture.”

HERBERT SPENCER, *Essay on the Social Organism*.



## CHAPTER XX.

*THE CO-OPERATIVE IDEA.*

THAT men will organise for common ends is an inevitable consequence of the social appetite. The family and the state are pre-eminently fundamental and necessary forms, in which this propensity manifests itself. The discussions of the preceding part are sufficient to show this. But that, nevertheless, these institutions are only means to ends, and that they must be judged by their efficiency in subserving their legitimate ends, we have endeavoured to make appear. The most formidable difficulty in the way of reaching this efficiency we found to lie in the tendency to elevate the means to the importance and dignity of ends in themselves, in fact to forget the central principle of all organic life that each part must always be the means and end of all the rest; and if this balance is not preserved, the organism perishes.

Since the sphere of the family is very circumscribed, and since the action of the state—if limited to attaining and preserving security for individuals—is also restricted, it is not surprising that the organising tendency in human nature should be still further developed in many ways, because the increased power arising from combination is patent and must always be impressing itself upon popular thought. The church exhibits one direction in which this development has appeared with great effect; and there are still others, which it will now be our task to consider.

The co-operative idea may seek to realise its purposes through the state administration or outside of it. If the former, to get control of the government is the first step to be taken; if the latter, obtaining the protection of government is all that is desired, the work being pursued through the channels of non-political life. Thus in all varieties of industrial, political, philanthropic, and educational effort we have attempts made to accumulate power for ends deemed desirable, by combination and co-operation.

Now there can be no doubt of the greater efficiency of organised

co-operative over desultory and unorganised attempts to accomplish any purpose. Nor is there room to doubt, either, the utility of co-operation for ends that are good, so long as it tends to achieve those ends and has no overbalancing evil consequences. In the condition of things, for instance, in which authority establishes itself against progress, co-operation to resist is highly praiseworthy and advantageous. It is very far from my present purpose to condemn the principle of combination in its essential character or to inveigh against its proper applications. But almost every idea that has been an inspiration of progress has been perverted to unworthy uses through the blind zeal of those whom it possesses; and when any principle is put forward as a panacea for social evils, it is of the greatest importance to note its tendencies, to determine where it will lead to excess, and to regulate its power according to strict interpretations of its usefulness. The idea of co-operation furnishes no exception to the general rule in this respect.

It will be recollected that in Chapter X. we found and enunciated two general precepts, which we deemed the most important to govern us in the determination of conduct to aid in the elimination of evil. The first of these was to aim at the minimum of extrinsic restraint and the maximum of liberty for the individual; the second was to aim at the most complete and universal development of the altruistic character. Let us examine the co-operative idea in the light of these precepts.

The fundamental notion in co-operation is nothing more than combination of powers for mutual advantage. It is the social idea in the sense of society being an organic unity. Its distinctive feature, however, is the accomplishment of results by union, by and through the corporation, so to speak, rather than through individuals. But its ends are those of the general or common good, as it may be conceived. We may assume, therefore, that the co-operative idea in its purity does not propose for its objects of achievement anything different from the ends of general happiness and abatement of evil which have been herein set forth as fixing the moral law. If, then, the means relied upon are not the best calculated to promote this end, or if they should work results opposed to it, they must be condemned, or at least qualified, even according to their own foundation principles.

Observing the evil that undeniably arises in human affairs from the struggling of individuals against each other in competition,

wherein every man is for himself and not for any other, many people have thought that if organisations could be formed wherein each person should be subordinated to the corporate control, the beneficial ends of each person could be wrought out far more perfectly and with less likelihood of detriment through the corporate body. Each person should be equal to every other before the law, and the corporate authority should be exercised to secure this equality in everything needed. Inequalities of social condition, arising in regard to property or political or industrial power, would hence be done away with. In its application to the governmental administration, this doctrine is expressed in the demand that the state shall act positively instead of negatively to secure the welfare of its individuals. And, lest individual domination should assert itself, all property rights should be vested in the state, which gives not ownership, but only liberty of use, to individuals.

Without particularising further just at present, it must appear that this doctrine does not accord with the precepts above referred to; at least with the first one. The minimum of extrinsic restraint certainly is not aimed at; on the contrary, extrinsic control is everywhere sought to be increased and extended. The second precept is not excluded. It may be urged that the co-operative idea tends toward securing the universal altruistic disposition, or it may, perhaps, be said that if a perfect control over individuals is attained, the want of power to effect will make the disposition of secondary consequence. These possible claims we shall be obliged to consider. I do not think it will be urged that the altruistic disposition is undesirable, unless, perhaps, when it is exhibited in such form as to weaken the power of firm, determined, and, perhaps, unsympathetic action and individual exertion for beneficial ends.

To begin with, let us see, in general, what can be accomplished and what cannot be accomplished by co-operation, upon a reasonable view of human capacities and tendencies. It must not be forgotten, though apt to be, that co-operation is co-operation of individuals. Whatever is done must be done through the wills and the acts of individuals. Hence the results to be attained are wholly conditioned upon the constitution of the men and women that we have to deal with. The society, therefore, in co-operation is only an abstract entity. It is an aggregation of individuals. When we say that power resides in the society, that the society

is to accomplish this, that, or the other, we mean that some individuals in the society are to do what the others command, urge, or acquiesce in, and perhaps are ready to assist in, if need be. This was sufficiently illustrated in the discussions of the preceding part. It is hence of the utmost importance in co-operation that a unanimity of will be secured within the society. Some degree of this unanimity is the requisite to any co-operation at all. And so far forth as there is within the organisation a lack of concentration of disposition its effectiveness is impaired. Much more will its power be curtailed if there be force within acting in positive opposition to the ends of co-operation.

Again, there must be something of intellectual agreement. The best harmony of disposition in the world would be of no practical use, if everybody had a plan of his own for carrying out the common purposes, and no one could be persuaded that any other method than his was of advantage. The unanimity of disposition would itself be lost under such circumstances, and the society would fall to pieces. And so far forth as there is heterogeneity of opinion, it undoubtedly tends to lessen the disposition to co-operate and diminishes the force to be employed, although by concessions disruption may be averted. These two, then—harmony of volition and intellectual agreement—are necessary elements of successful co-operation. If there be in the society homogeneity of will and of opinion, the co-operation is substantially efficient and can accomplish its purposes, except as thwarted by a *vis major* of outside resistance.

Unfortunately for this perfection the conditioned suppositions will inevitably be more largely contrary to than in accordance with fact. Individuals do not agree. Diversities of mental capacity, education, environment, all combine to produce great diversities in judgment, opinion, and belief. And the more action of a practical nature is involved the less is the unanimity. People may agree very readily upon the general proposition that the welfare of the whole society is paramount, but when it comes to getting particular questions of casuistry under this principle they are apt to be hopelessly at variance.

Equally true is it that there is always more or less heterogeneity of will. I have just remarked that this unavoidably arises from differences of opinion. But the co-operative society has much more than this to contend against. It has to encounter the egoistic disposition. This may be openly manifested or covertly

maintained. The selfishness of men is all the time prompting them to utilise the society for their own benefit in disregard of the rights of others. Men not doing the right will no longer know or teach the right, and the power of the centrifugal forces will increase against the centripetal.

These disadvantages inherent in co-operation are greater in the ratio that the members of the society are larger and its sphere of action more extended. The more individuals there are, the more independent centres of action there will be, and the greater the likelihood of both discordant opinions and wills. And the more general and far-reaching the aims, the worse it is for cohesion, since there is greater opportunity for doubt as to the utility of means, and with this more room for selfishness to covertly insinuate itself in forming sentiments to determine action—in making the worse appear the better reason. The natural tendency of the homogeneous to lapse into heterogeneity all the time works against the organic unity.

Now in every organisation these influences make themselves speedily felt, and those who are chiefly interested in the society have impressed upon them the necessity of doing something to counteract these tendencies. Very often, indeed, the society is organised with a view to their counteraction. If they are not met, the society will come to ruin.

The only way in which they can be defeated is by an enforced unanimity and uniformity. This means the concentration of power in the hands of a few, the repression of opposition, and perhaps of dissent. It involves the restriction of the spontaneity and liberty of the many, and places their interests for both determination and promotion in the control of a small number of persons. We are thus brought around to the question of individualism and authority, which we discussed in the last part, and have the same problems and perplexities before us; for to carry out the co-operative idea, where there is no real consentience and concurrence of volition, the power of authority must be brought to bear.

It is thus evident that any co-operative organisation must be a microcosm of the general social life, and subject to the same conditions. It has the same disadvantages, the same sources of weakness, the same inherent difficulties in the way of accomplishing its ends; and all this simply and plainly because its elements, its material, are the same individual components that make up all human society. For the purposes of this discussion, it may be

assumed that all developments of the co-operative idea occur in the midst of an existing social order. We need not suppose a state of barbarism or anarchy for present considerations. Having given a social order, co-operation is justified only in the view of bettering that order, and to this end its efforts are directed.

I have remarked that one phase of the co-operative idea presents as its immediate aim the securing the powers of the state for the purpose of gathering into state control the sources of happiness, manufacturing it and distributing to each man his equal portion. Less than this comprehensive scheme are many forms of political co-operation for specific ends. The ordinary political party exhibits one, where many unite upon a common platform for the sake of securing reforms in government, more or less radical. In industrial life there are combinations of capital against labour, and of labour against capital, associations for mutual protection and for aggressive action in great variety. Nor are examples of co-operation for philanthropic and educational purposes wanting. Besides the church, there are institutions of all sorts for benevolent work. The school is itself a co-operative organisation, as are still more manifestly the innumerable educational associations. In all these co-operative societies from the highest to the lowest, from the most comprehensive to the least inclusive, the difficulties in the way of efficiency which I have suggested are to some degree felt. And where these are overcome in the ways also mentioned, we have the evil of individual domination, which is just one of the things which co-operation starts out to prevent. And this brings on another very serious trouble. To promote efficiency and to maintain the integrity of the organisation, loyalty to the powers that be is a *sine qua non*. Thus the sentiment comes to be created that the society itself is superior to that for which it is an end. It begins to have that 'inherent sacredness' of which we spoke in the former chapters. The belief is encouraged that only through the particular society can the ends of the society be wrought. The maintenance of the society, and often of the *status quo* in the society, is deemed to be of transcendent importance. We have hence in the domination of the few and the repression of the many, both with respect to criticism and action, together with the commands of authority to fall down and worship, a strong barrier raised in the way of all progressive development. Now, if by any chance the few in power should be themselves either inefficient, mistaken in their ideas, or corrupt, the society becomes a power for evil, great in proportion

to its accumulated strength. The same set of circumstances may make it as valueless also for its own ends as if it lacked cohesiveness. It is liable to be diverted from its original purposes and to become a machine for the injury rather than for the benefit of mankind, however beneficent its foundation objects may have been.

From these considerations it must be evident that the co-operative idea does not furnish a universal or a perfect cure for the woes of human social life, because it only proposes to relieve society by creating societies which themselves are infected with all the diseases which they propose to heal and prevent. And the wider the proposed scope of the co-operative effort, the truer is this remark. So that if we formed a co-operative union for the purpose of overturning the present order, and providing a better government, and succeeded in getting enough people into it to prevail, in the substitution we should have only a new order, subject to all the imperfections of the former, so far as essential constitution is concerned, and whose superiority or inferiority to that displaced would depend, not upon any enforced co-operation, but upon the good or evil dispositions of the individuals composing the organic whole. This last factor we never can get rid of by co-operation, unless perhaps by exceptionally intelligent co-operation to make people better; and it is the prime factor in all super-organic life.

That mere co-operation cannot produce the altruistic character is clear from the fact that altruism is itself necessary to the success of the co-operative idea. Without the altruistic disposition there is no coherence, or, if there be, it is a coherence which defeats its own ends. This is necessary to organic growth, wherein each part is at once means and end of all the rest. With this, co-operation takes place spontaneously and inevitably; without it real co-operation is impossible, and the seeming co-operation is egoistic domination and egoistic subserviency. To be sure, united effort and subordination to a given end may have a reflective effect in promoting altruism, but only when the effort has its source in altruism. At best it is an indirect means, save, as already said, where the direct purpose of the co-operation is to develop or practise altruism as in philanthropy and education.

Our general observations have gone far enough to indicate that, valuable as may be co-operative organisation for specific purposes and at particular times, the co-operative idea alone, howsoever far

it may be carried out, will not work the elimination of evil; and that in some of its assumptions and tendencies it is likely to prove a decided obstacle in the way of securing the maximum of happiness for all mankind. I will now invite the reader to an examination of some of the more particular forms in which this idea is prevalent.



## CHAPTER XXI.

*SOCIALISM.*

THE co-operative idea finds its most complete development in what is usually termed Socialism, whose principles tend to a greater extension of the state authority than is involved in that theory which makes the sole office of the state to maintain security. The socialists declare that this latter theory results not in securing freedom for the individual but only equality of right to freedom. 'If all men were equal in fact, this might answer well enough, but, since they are not, the result is simply to place the weak at the mercy of the powerful.' The socialists further claim 'that the protection of an equality of right to freedom is an insufficient aim for the state in a morally-ordered community. It ought to be supplemented by the securing of solidarity of interests and community and reciprocity of development. History all along is an incessant struggle with nature, a victory over misery, ignorance, poverty, powerlessness—i.e. over unfreedom, thralldom, restrictions of all kinds. The perpetual conquest over these restrictions is the development of freedom, is the growth of culture. Now this is never effected by each man for himself. It is the function of the state to do it. The state is the union of individuals into a moral whole, which multiplies a millionfold the aggregate of the powers of each. The end and function of the state is not merely to guard freedom, but to develop it; to put the individuals who compose it in a position to attain and maintain such objects, such levels of existence, such stages of culture, power, and freedom as they would have been incapable of reaching by their own individual efforts alone. The state is the great agency for guiding and training the human race to positive and progressive development; in other words, for bringing human destiny (i.e. the culture of which man as man is susceptible) to real shape and form in actual existence. Not freedom but development is now the keynote. The state must take a positive part, proportioned to its immense capacity, in the great work

which . . . constitutes history, and must forward man's progressive conquest over misery, ignorance, poverty, and restrictions of every sort. This is the purpose, the essence, the moral nature of the state, which she can never entirely abrogate without ceasing to be, and which she has indeed always been obliged by the very force of things more or less to fulfil, often without her conscious consent, and sometimes in spite of the opposition of her leaders. In a word, the state must, by the union of all, help each to his full development.'

This exposition of the general socialistic doctrines of Ferdinand Lassalle, by John Rae, M.A.,<sup>1</sup> indicates the central idea of the prevailing socialistic movements. As to the imperfections of present systems, as to the inequalities, the injustice of which socialism complains, the sufferings of the lower classes, the recklessness and positive selfishness of the upper, a great deal may be conceded. But the question arises whether these imperfections and inequalities are the fault of the governmental system and not of human nature itself, and whether the proposed new order would work any improvement. The essential character of this new order we see to be an enlargement of the sphere of activity of the state, and this doctrine, though not common to all who style themselves or are styled socialists, is yet the characteristic feature of the leading developments of socialism at the present time.

The considerations adduced in the last chapter apply themselves with much force in opposition to this extreme view. Their conclusiveness will still further appear when we inquire in what manner this assumed beneficial power of the state must be maintained and exercised. The problem naturally is susceptible of division into two parts : first, how can the requisite power be accumulated and so maintained ? secondly, under what regulations shall it be exercised ? An examination of these two questions will expose the fallacy of socialism.

The power of a state lies primarily in its men—that is, in the individual human beings belonging to it. It lies secondarily in its ability through its individuals to command and control those things which men desire for their own individual ends. In order to utilise its men, it must have control over them, it must be able to employ them as so much force under government and direction. This can only be accomplished by means of other men. Thus a governing class must be separated out from the governed, to whom

<sup>1</sup> *Contemporary Socialism*, 1884.

the carrying out of the ends of the state must be entrusted. The more these ends are multiplied, the more need is there of hands to execute the will of the state. The governing class is hence enlarged as the work for government to do is increased. And in order to effectiveness there must be unity, which unity again can only be secured by the subordination of some of the governing class to others. The central power must be strengthened in every way. Consolidation and centralisation must go on even in the governing body. The result is hence inevitable that power only can be accumulated and maintained by a hierarchy of which the heads shall be enabled to wield the whole force of the state for the state's purposes. It would certainly be utopian to suppose that this could be achieved without a strong military organisation, nor does it seem to be expected by at any rate some of the socialists themselves, though they are not very consistent on this point. They however insist upon centralisation. Karl Marx and his followers 'insisted that the social *régime* of collective property and systematic co-operative production could not possibly be introduced, maintained, or regulated, except by means of an omnipotent and centralised political authority—call it the state, call it the collectivity, call it what you like—which should have the final disposal of everything.'<sup>1</sup> An omnipotent centralised political authority, which can be sustained only by a large class of both civil and military officials, is, then, the first outcome of the socialistic theory.

In order to control the material resources which are of value for human happiness, one of the first things proposed by the Socialists is the expropriation of landed property. No private ownership of land is to be allowed, but all the land is to belong to the state, and its use allotted to individuals upon just terms. It is undoubtedly true that the ownership of land in any event means something different from the ownership of movables. All that the former can mean is the exclusive right to use, this including the right to prevent others from using. No one can *consume* land except in a metaphorical sense. He can strip it of its products, he can impoverish the soil, but entirely destroy it he cannot. He does not produce it, he cannot consume it; he can only utilise it for his own advantage. Land has been acquired by individuals in various ways—by original unresisted occupation, by conquest, by purchase, by gift; but in whatever way gained, individual ownership

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* chap. iii.

from the nature of the case can be only a recognised right to use and to exclude others from using. Now state ownership of land can only be a limitation of the individual right to use by other individuals. The state cannot produce or consume any more than the individual can; and the state cannot *own* except in the sense of controlling use. This limitation of individual right may be one of length of tenure, of alienation, of disposition by testament, or a limitation by imposing conditions of taxation, of improvement of the ground, of production, and the like. With the principles which justify taxation of lands for the support of government we are familiar; but though this will occur under any system, the more complicated the governmental machinery the greater expense will its support entail, which is of itself a misfortune unless counterbalanced by resultant benefits. Of course the effects of so-called state ownership will vary according to the conditions of the limitation proposed, but any plan looking to such ownership will, if carried into effect, render more uncertain the individual's tenure than it is at present under the prevailing system. Whatever incentive to improvement and to production lies in security of tenure, this will at any rate be diminished by greater liability of state interference and consequent deprivation. And if the possessor be ousted, state ownership will only put some other individuals in occupation under like conditions, with the effects to be repeated. In that form of socialism which proposes to abolish also individual occupation and cultivate the land by industrial associations, security of holding a place is still further attenuated and the individual is still less able to calculate upon any permanent benefits to follow his exertions. He is almost wholly at the mercy of others. Thus, under individual ownership, the state secures a relative permanency and exclusiveness of tenure to the individual who lawfully acquires, placing alienation within his control (subject to taxation). Under this proposed state-ownership the state allows a relative transiency and uncertainty of tenure to the individual occupying, with perhaps little or no exclusiveness, and places alienation or termination of occupancy within the control of other individuals. In the latter case still individuals *own* the land in the same sense as in the former, the difference being one of the exclusiveness, permanency, certainty, and individual control of the ownership. And in the case of individual ownership so-called, the state *owns* the land in the same sense as under the proposed state-ownership, the difference being in the degree of control over indi-

vidual use that it exercises. In other words, the whole question of land-ownership is one of use by individuals as against each other.

Under the ideal of the socialistic *régime*, it is also proposed that the state shall accumulate power by industrial production, and by acquiring and controlling exclusively the means of transportation and inter-communication. This can only be done by taxation of some kind. Individuals are required to put the products of their labour into the control of the governing class for distribution and application. They are divested of direct power to apply the results of their toil. Without following out into their *minutiae* the details of the socialistic plan, it is evident that state power under such a system is maintained and sustained by a despotic use of men and by the gathering of material resources into the hands of a governing class. On the whole, therefore, the socialistic idea when carried out must work a very considerable abridgment of individual freedom.

But this is not what the socialists claim. They find fault because there is not enough liberty under the present system, and laud their own because, they say, it will secure more. 'The end and function of the state,' urged Lassalle, 'is not merely to guard freedom, but to develop it; to put the individuals who compose it in a position to attain and maintain such objects, such levels of existence, such stages of culture, power, and freedom as they would have been incapable of reaching by their own individual efforts. . . . In a word, the state must by the union of all help each to his full development.'<sup>1</sup> Marx claims that 'class rule and class labour must be swept away . . . and a new reign must be inaugurated which would be politically democratic and socially communistic, and in which the free development of each should be the condition for the free development of all.'<sup>2</sup> Now the development of individuals presupposes a force within to develop. Men do not develop by outside accretions as a sand bar at the mouth of a river grows. They develop by the expansion of the organic forces within them. The first condition, then, of development is freedom or removal of preventing restraints from the environment. Plants do not come to completeness when they are choked up with other plants, but when they are relieved from surrounding interferences. All that is needed is room for their own forces to work the expansion, soil and climate being supposed constant. Of the same nature is human growth, and this seems to be conceded in the expressed aim

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

of the socialists to promote the fullest development. When they declare that the state will do for each what the individual himself cannot do, they would doubtless say that the state shall merely supply favouring conditions for awakening and drawing forth to its fullest extent the individual spontaneity, not crush out that spontaneity. That this latter is under present conditions so thoroughly crushed forms the staple of their bitter complaints. So we must assume that this very conspicuous abridgment of individual freedom, which is necessary in order to make the state 'omnipotent' in its centralised authority, is only temporary or formal, and to be compensated in the exercise of the powers acquired by results which shall really increase freedom and promote individual development.

It is not contemplated that individuals shall be relieved from labour. On the contrary, it was one of the propositions of Marx that there should be compulsory obligation of labour upon all equally. Consequently the benefits must accrue in what men get for their work—more comforts, greater security for necessities and perhaps more leisure, through a more equal distribution of labour. The state will see to it that the labourer want for nothing, whereas at present he often suffers for lack of daily bread, and with his utmost efforts can get but little more than what is absolutely essential to keep him alive. Yet if the state is bound to supply his wants, and if the products of his labour are beyond his control, he has no incentive to work. He will only do what he is compelled to do, and his mental activity will be devoted to calculating how little work he can do and how much he can get from the state. Hence instead of co-operation we should still have competition. The state, therefore, in addition to its primary tasks will inevitably have the additional burden of compelling people to do their duty.

When we begin to consider how the state shall use its powers all the perplexity comes upon us which we discerned in the last chapter respecting action by the society which shall both be efficient and faithful to the ends of the organism. The state must both allot duties and distribute the products of labour; that is, the governors of the state must do so; that is, some individuals must do so. Some persons must be a law to others. Some must command and others must obey. The more the state has to do, the larger the governing class; and the larger this class, the more danger both of venality, uncertainty, and ineffectiveness generally. In order to determine what are the best methods there must be

discussion and consideration, allowing both the formation and the expression of opinions. But all this is at the expense of unanimity and hence of executive efficiency. On the other hand, if discussion and the formation of opinions be discouraged, the government becomes autocratic, bureaucratic, and oligarchical. To say that this latter form can be sustained by the voluntary submission of its subjects and unsupported by military authority is so preposterous a claim that it requires no word of refutation. And yet very often socialists hold up as a virtue of their system that it will do away with military despotisms. Yet, again, they are for ever calling for an omnipotent centralised authority. They cannot have the one without the other, deceive themselves as they may under plausible generalities of expression.

In dealing with the use of land the governing authority would be obliged to make some allotment for the purposes of production. Unless production should continue, there would soon be nothing to distribute and everybody would perish; but, as we remarked, the state would go into the business of promoting production with the strongest stimulus to productive labour removed from the minds of its labourers. If the state cultivated all the lands by means of 'industrial armies,' we should witness the effect of gangs of hired labourers, who were certain of getting their wages whether they did more than the most perfunctory work or not. Everything would tend to a minimum of both skill and labour. If the state allotted land to individuals without power to alienate or with uncertainty of tenure, a like result would ensue. The individual would be without that inward incentive to production which creates a disposition to productive activity. Enterprise would be extinguished or never born, and all vital interest in the cultivation and improvement of land would cease. Every person would be expecting that another would reap the benefit of his sowing. He could make no provision for his own future or that of his family. His plans in any event, so far as local habitation is concerned, could only extend to the limits of his tenure, and even within those limits he would be without that sense of independence and strength, which security in the permanent occupation of land always gives. Again, how could the state determine to whom to allot the good lands and to whom the poor? How could it say what should be the limit of each man's capacity for labour, and how much any default of productiveness was due to the soil? Would it take away a man's tenure if he did not produce a good

crop, or would it only fine or flog him? How much allowance would it make for sickness or weakness? On what principle would it allot the meadow to Tom, the hill pasture to Dick, and the forest to Harry? How could it be just in such matters, and how would it if it only could?

The same trouble would be inevitable throughout the whole circuit of productive industries undertaken by the state. No body of men in official position is ever competent to say what work individuals are best fitted for. No more is it possible that they should satisfy everybody in the division of labour. Discontent would everywhere prevail; self-development would be impossible; energetic application could only be secured by the overseer and the lash; that efficiency which comes from love of one's task and from adaptation growing out of that love would be more rare and uncertain; in fine, a hopeless mediocrity would characterise all the results of this centralised co-operative production.

Now when we ask how the state will succeed as a distributor, the absurdity of this whole scheme is still more apparent. In the first place, the governing class must be supported in contentment or the central authority falls in pieces. Their wants must receive an especial consideration. Then there must be a division of the rest of the products according to need. In theory everybody is to have all he wants. Beautiful and blessed as is this anticipation, it sometimes happens that there is not enough to go around, especially since individuals will claim to be the judges of their own wants. One man might not be satisfied unless he had the whole. To be sure he could not have the whole, but if he desired it and was refused, it would spoil the theory. If a person desires more than he ought to, he is not going to be made happy by a denial, however unreasonable his claims may be. People would not agree among themselves as to what each ought to have. Hence instead of general happiness, there would be throughout the state irritation, jealousy, spite, wrath, which would be very far from the postulated beatitude, and which would be highly inimical to social order and progressive development.

It may be said that, though these may be the tendencies of Socialism when the latter is superficially apprehended, they are yet only the uncorrected tendencies, and that Socialism itself will work the correction. If this be so, we are led to inquire how? Karl Marx spoke of his social utopia as a democracy. It may be, then, that the governing class which we have seen to be necessary



is to be selected by popular vote under short tenures of office, so that unfaithful or inefficient officers may quickly be replaced by others better qualified. Then we shall see all the evils of popular elections enormously intensified. Since with the government rests the control of all the material resources and all the inhabitants of the state, the allotment of labour, and the distribution of products, positions in the official service will be all there is worth aiming at. Hence there will be a tremendous competition for those places. The competitive strife will be transferred from the industrial to the political arena, and the scramble will be the more violent and embittered because all the avenues of industrial success are closed. The effect of all this cannot but be injurious both to the moral character and the efficiency of the administration. Those who are in office will be anxious to favour those they think will be inclined to keep them in place. The officials will become trimmers, and their energy will be paralysed. They will be more likely to become venal. Bribery of all sorts and trades for corrupt ends will be greatly increased. On the part of those out of office there will be constant war upon those within to get them out, and upon each other to prevent each other from getting in beforehand. Everywhere there will be such a clash of conflicting interests as to utterly preclude that unanimity of will and of intellectual appreciation which we have seen to be so essential to the co-operative idea.

The only alternative of this is a despotism, and to this latter socialism inevitably tends, as it grows more practical and less visionary. It may be admitted that a vast autocratic, bureaucratic power may be created, and exist, which shall be very efficient in its action in controlling everything by the power of the state. One such power at least is now in existence in Europe, to say nothing of more remote quarters of the globe or of nations of past history. Why are not the socialists satisfied with this? Why does it not exactly fulfil their ideal? As an actual fact we find them holding this power in the most utter detestation. Perhaps it is because they think the autocracy and bureaucracy does not do its work for the best interests of the people. But how, with such a system, can they be guaranteed against such a condition as they are at the while declaiming against? What socialist is the one truly qualified to be Czar, and what others to be chiefs of bureaus and commanders of the centralised army? When the socialists will themselves agree upon their hierarchy it will be time enough for

the rest of us to look up the record and pass our judgment upon qualifications.

At this late day in the world's history, it does not seem necessary, except in an elementary work for schools, to rehearse the objections against absolutism. The experience of many nations and of many centuries counts for something, and the world once emancipated is not likely to return to Cæsarism, nor to believe that an improvement has been effected when one form of absolutism has superseded another. Of the two, the old tyrant is preferable to the new; for under the old some order, bad as it may be, has already been settled, and men have learned to adapt themselves to it; whereas under the new all is as yet uncertain and undetermined. In this view, it is not essential in the case of socialism to do more than clearly reveal its nature, the character of its structure, and its inevitable issues. Its power lies in its exhibition of present evils and wrongs, not in the system which it has formulated. It may succeed in creating revolutions, but it will never succeed in establishing a stable order in place of the government overthrown. It is first anarchic, then despotic, in its tendencies. It is utterly subversive even of its own proposed ultimate ends. It is either as utopian as some of the earlier forms of socialism, like St.-Simonism, in which case it is impracticable; or its result would be the most intolerable tyranny the world has ever seen, utterly fatal to all progress and development, and wholly destructive of the common happiness.

When all men have become perfect in both knowledge and goodness, then perhaps the socialistic scheme may be intrinsically available. But when that time comes we shall have no need for any government whatever. Under present conditions, after considering what the socialists propose, we shall see no reason to qualify the two precepts which we believed to best express the general course of action necessary to be pursued in seeking the elimination of evil.

## CHAPTER XXII.

*THE POLITICAL PARTY.*

IN all democracies, and under those constitutions where changes in the governing body itself or in the policy of the government are effected through suffrage, organisation for the support of measures and men, as well as in opposition to both, has always been conspicuous in the political life. The value of particular organisations is never to be judged wholly by the ends they propose to themselves, for account must always be taken of the personal factors making up the means the society has for accomplishing its ends. This is almost always lost to the sight of those who are enthusiastic over co-operation as a method of achieving results. However admirable the platform of a party may be, its success and supremacy may be wholly vicious, and fraught with danger to the common weal, unless its controlling sentiments are those which the moral law approves. This means that the controlling sentiments of the individual members of the party who govern it shall be righteous.

It has been pointed out by statesmen of great sagacity and eminence that the salvation of a popular government depends upon the vitality of an organised opposition to the party in power. There must be some check upon those in authority, or they will, either through carelessness or corruption, abuse their trusts. Undoubtedly this is a wise conclusion, amply substantiated by actual facts of national experience. But of course the party in power will organise in self-defence, and a serious contest arises between the two parties for success. Co-operation on one side begets co-operation upon the other, with a very bitter competition between the two.

Success on the part of either is obtained for the organisation as such both by drawing in converts from outside and by increasing the efficiency within. If there are only two parties, additions to one must be by defection from the other, supposing everybody to be more or less closely identified with one of the two. If there are

several parties, or a large class of indifferent people as between the two, recruits may come from any or all; and there are also more centres of force for drawing away from each. The maintenance of the numbers which each one has is thus of great importance. While seeking to seduce outsiders from their allegiance, care must be taken that no deserters slip through the lines.

This necessity for thorough cohesive organisation which thus arises from competition, though it ultimates in co-operation, does not thereby do away with competition. It only intensifies competition. If there is value in competition this may be very well; but if, as is contended, the principle of competition is wrong, and co-operation alone is right, we certainly have here another incongruity, like that which we found when considering socialism—the promised co-operation only works out another form of competition.

What ought to happen is the making of a higher synthesis by which the parties themselves are conceived as working together for a common good, and always measuring themselves and their doings by that as a standard and ideal. The statesmen who have lauded the system of opposing political parties in a state unquestionably had this in view, and only bestowed their approbation upon the supposition that these parties would regard themselves, and be regarded, as means to a superior end, never to be lost sight of nor attenuated. In theory such is indeed the case. Partisans proclaim the good of the whole as their aim, and seek to gain converts oftentimes by attempting to show that this general good is best attained through the success of their party. The platforms upon which party action is supposably founded declare for certain principles and measures as of importance for the welfare of the country. At least there is a pretence of acting for the good of the people; and to make such a pretence is at any rate regarded as a necessary formality.

Practically, however, the higher end is often defeated by the old and ever-recurring difficulty—the fixing of so much attention upon the means that the latter rise to the position of ends in themselves. And this, apart from individual selfish ambition, grows out of excessive confidence in the co-operative idea. In order to make the co-operation complete and effective, men eliminate that which alone makes the co-operation valuable. They take away that real unity of thought and feeling which creates a moral organic constructive force, and get in place of it blind destructive force, to be wielded by a few in modes that these few determine. It is the

co-operation of soldiers in an army. Napoleon said that a soldier is a machine to obey orders. This is precisely the definition of a member of a political party in the minds of many political leaders of the present day. Is it possible that rule by a political army is what is meant by 'government of the people, by the people, and for the people'? If it is, and this state of things exists, then popular government has already perished.

Not less upon the leaders than upon the rank and file of the organisation is this sort of sentiment demoralising. The latter come to regard loyalty to the party as the test of the full performance of the duties of the citizen. They allow their chiefs to do their thinking for them. They vote unblushingly against their own better judgment if they have ideas of their own. They believe indefinitely and without reflection that ruin will be wrought if the other party prevail. They decline to see the faults of their own side. Theirs to obey, to follow. The country, the state, is their party; others are foreigners and strangers. Within is celestial beauty; without is darkness, howling, and gnashing of teeth. Upon the leaders there is the pressure of responsibility for the direction if they are personally honest. They plan to defeat the other side. That is the objective point, the chief end. They must govern their movements accordingly. They must say enough to satisfy the most, and as little as possible to offend. Generalities in principles therefore commend themselves, because they are easily evaded, and anyone can put his own interpretation upon them. Personal favours must be shown to prevent desertion; the enemy must be watched, and every lapse taken advantage of; the idea of possible good to the whole from the success of the other side is absolutely excluded. To preserve the organisation and win success for it is the prime consideration for the chiefs if they expect to maintain their rank as leaders and to obtain the emoluments of party success.

In addition to this, the machine organisation affords the very best opportunity for positive venality and corruption. It is important to retain the services of a good party worker, even if he be a thief and enriching himself at the expense of the people. The temptation to blink his vice is very powerful. And the closeness, compactness, and discipline of the party present great inducements for venal persons of all sorts to enter in. They know how to make themselves of consequence, and as they rise in the ranks their chances of plunder or private profit indirectly gained are increased.

As their power is enlarged they shape the whole policy of the party with a view to personal profit. It is difficult for those more honest to restrain them, because to do so will produce dissension and injure the party. And if a reign of terror exists, as is often the case, the one who raises his voice does so at great peril to all his interests. He is branded as a malcontent, slandered, befouled, beaten, robbed, and turned out of doors naked.

The result of all this, and much more evil of the same nature—to detail which would require greater space than can be allowed to this topic—is to make party declarations mere hypocrisy and without significance; to make party action merely a contest of one organisation within the body politic with another or others for success at all hazards; and to create a feeling that the only restraint upon such action, or upon the action of its individuals, in official station, should be fear of the opposition. Fortunate it is that this last restraint of competition exists. It is of considerable value; but with this only remaining for a reliance, what a terrible state of demoralisation is revealed! What an utter want of all that sense of political and social duty, of the uses and purposes of government, and, indeed, of moral relations generally, which is necessary to any kind of organic unity! In short, if the 'Old Deluder' had set himself at work to devise a scheme by which in a state patriotism should be extirpated, honesty should be depreciated, progressive development should be chilled and blighted, hypocrisy should be systematically cultivated, selfishness should be promoted, all high and lofty ideals of right and duty, as pillars of cloud by day and of fire by night, for guidance, swept away from the political sky—he could not have accomplished his purpose better than by planning and achieving the development of the political party as it has actually come about, under a perversion of the co-operative idea, in the largest and most eminent democracy of the present age.

It would be very easy for me to make pointed and definite illustration of the truth of these words. But it also will be easy for the reader, and he will enjoy making the application himself much better than to have me make it. If he be an American, the democrat will have confirmed his own opinion of the terrible effects of republican misrule; while if he be a republican, he will see more clearly the dangers of democratic ascendancy. But what I say I say as against both alike—against any and all political machines wherever they may be found. Though my voice reach only a little way it is directed with no discrimination against both

Trojan and Tyrian. The remedy is not in the triumph of any organisation or in the overthrow of any other. It is not in more perfect organisation as such, but in less perfect. Or, perhaps better, as there must be some organisation, it lies in entirely different ideas of the limitations of organisation—a better understanding of where it is needed, how it is to be used, and when it must stop its work and disintegrate.

Organisation must always be subordinated to organic growth; and to promote this last there must be opportunity for every part to grow. The co-operation must always proceed from within, never from extrinsic constraint. Individual independence of thought and of action is what should be cultivated and encouraged. The sentiment of loyalty to a party should be discountenanced as a moral absurdity. It is of the greatest consequence to inculcate the notion that each man may and ought to give effect in his own way to his own ideas formed by his own independent thought. Impatience of dictation on the one side and unwillingness to constrain upon the other is the healthy condition.

This must appear to everyone the moment the welfare of the whole is taken into account as the paramount consideration. Parties start out with such an idea; but as the organisation grows more extensive, more military, more hierarchical, this end is lost from view. To prevent this growth is, therefore, of importance. The rebel within the party, the 'scratcher,' the 'kicker,' the independent, renders an inestimable service to society; and that sentiment which favours the growth of such independent thought and action is the sentiment wherein lies the salvation of the state, where government by political party is in vogue. Organisation to promote independence of political character would be most praiseworthy, and would serve a good purpose, until, indeed, it should happen that the society itself became an end to itself, when counter-movement to abolish it would in turn become desirable.

It will, no doubt, be urged that organisation must be met by counter-organisation; that a well-organised bad party can only be defeated by a well-organised good party, and to gain the latter, there must be discipline and long-continued efforts to obtain military precision and certainty of movement. This is not denied; but that is no reason why the organisation should be perpetuated for its own sake. Emergencies doubtless will arise when a centralised organisation is necessary to meet the crisis, which may be, indeed, prolonged; but that crisis sometime will be over and the

end for which the centralised power was developed be accomplished. Then, under the sentiment of authority, loyalty, and 'inherent sacredness,' the party will try to continue its existence for itself as an end. The moment this occurs it becomes dangerous to the state.

It is not the present intention to condemn all co-operative organisation. As pointed out in the beginning of this Part, it is our aim only to show the abuse to which an exaggerated notion of what co-operation can do inevitably leads. That abuse is always the making the society, its organisation and its methods, the chief end, forgetting its original purpose. In the social and political world the same law prevails as governs the development of individual character. When there is organised movement for a social end outside of its own preservation, it is in aid of progress with all its drawbacks. But when its movements become self-centred, and its ends its own power and advantage, it ceases to be of social value, and, on the contrary, becomes an obstacle in the way of the realisation of the common good.

Besides the education of people to habits of independence in political thought and action, there is another very practical and most efficacious remedy against this tendency of political parties to live for themselves alone. That remedy is to destroy their power of controlling government patronage. If the bond of community of interest in the welfare of the state which originally united them has become weakened, and there is no public policy to hold them together, it will be private interest which will take the place of the other. The organisation can only be kept solid by personal advantages to accrue to its members. If these advantages are cut off the party goes to pieces. Thus, as complete a divorcement as is possible of the public service from arbitrary control of the party in power is highly desirable. If there are no substantial rewards for faithful party service, there will no longer be any motive for such service, when patriotic considerations are no longer operative. This is obvious and plain; and though the enlargement of the idea, and its consistent application, is of the highest importance in practical politics, its vindication on the theoretical side is not needed. It carries its full weight in the statement; and it ought to be enforced with all the moral power of those in the community who love their country, who are not willing that government shall become a business of gathering in spoils for the governors at the expense of the governed, and who believe in that simple and pure



doctrine that a public office is a public, not merely or principally a party, trust.

I have had occasion to refer to the United States of America as exemplifying the evils of party domination. It certainly ought to be called to our mind, then, that the intelligence and moral excellence of the American people is working out the salvation of the nation satisfactorily along precisely the lines which the present discussion has indicated. They have seen the true remedies and are applying them. And the contest over the application is the chief 'issue' in American politics to-day. That the result will be favourable we cannot doubt, because under the constitutional *régime* the security and independence of the individual are so fully guaranteed.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*INDUSTRIAL CO-OPERATION.*

IN all industrial life there is co-operation in some form, if only in the comparatively simple relations of employer and employed. The term, however, is ordinarily used to designate a greater complexity of combination than this—union of a number of men together, upon a basis of identity of interest, for certain specified purposes. And this exists for an immense variety of objects and under very many phases. Sometimes it is an organisation upon shares under legal forms of incorporation, and sometimes an association for deliberative purposes and concerted action, without property appertaining to the society and without recognised legal status. In all of them, however, the general object is to accumulate power to be used for the mutual advantage of those concerned.

There are extant, to be sure, some socialistic ideas of carrying on all the ordinary activities of life which relate to production by means of societies, even to the extent of accomplishing household work through the organisation. Experiments of this sort have been tried, but never succeeded for a very long time. There is not the peril of society generally in these attempts to form communistic organisations that exist when the design is to use the powers of the state for such purposes, since it is optional with the individual to withdraw from the society, which it is not in the latter case unless by expatriation. But the general objection as to ineffectiveness through heterogeneity is of full force. It may be that at times there can arise a co-operative organisation wherein the minds of its components are so thoroughly of one accord that the society can exist to the great contentment of its members, and with a considerable degree of success for all its purposes. But the thought which recurs to our mind is that such success can only be achieved through the altruistic character of those united; and when they possess this character there is no need of any

organisation at all. There is the benefit of a neighbourhood furnishing very good social advantages. It is both better and pleasanter to be surrounded by good people than by rascals; but all the moral ends would be just as well attained without the communal system, while individual autonomy would be a better guaranty of a continuance of the happy condition of altruism, since restriction, inasmuch as it could only be by other individuals, would be all the while conducing to provoke resistance. As an educator for altruism communism seems to me to possess no utility over the ordinary social arrangements. There is much less opportunity for clashing and collision when the independence of the individual is little hampered, and, as has been remarked before, altruism is always a pre-requisite to harmony of close co-operation. To sleep three in a bed is not a potent means of grace. If the grace abounds beforehand it may be accomplished successfully—otherwise the strongest will be moved to kick the others out; whereas peace would have prevailed if they had each occupied a single couch, though in the same room.

Division of labour there must be, and natural laws will by their operation secure this; but everyone is best able to judge of what he can best do. This may be disputed; but in a broad sense it is true. The broad sense is, that the stimulus to effective work must come from the individual conviction and desire, not from the impositions of task-masters. The latter is slave-labour, the former free labour. But in the industrial commune, if there is, as theory requires, an administrative division, some people at any rate will get tasks which they do not like and against which they inwardly rebel. This is likely to be the lot of the many rather than the few. If a spirit of self-abnegation and conscientious devotion to the purposes of the organisation prevail the effect of this may be counteracted and good work turned out. But, as we were just remarking, the condition is not a favourable one for conscientiousness and altruism. Both egoism and altruism wax and wane according to natural laws, which must be heeded. We cannot gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. The truth overlooked is, that each individual is an organism which must adapt itself to its environment. It feels its own needs as no other can. It knows its own meat and its own poison, after some preliminary adolescent education. Its life is in the growth of its own powers. Unless it can assimilate it decays and perishes. It can only assimilate by its own selective activity. Others may place different aliments

around, but it must choose. If the world would appreciate this, and act accordingly, we should escape many foolish experiments, and behold a development of humanity that would astonish even the wildest dreamers. There is no reason to believe, and no evidence in fact, that such a development could ever be produced by industrial communism.

It is not, however, so much this phase of co-operation that the present chapter aims to touch, as two classes of exemplifications of the co-operative idea which are very conspicuous in their present influences upon industrial life. The one is an organisation of capital, the other of labour. I refer to the Corporation upon the one hand, and the Trade Union on the other.

The corporation is the creature of the state, and derives all its powers from grants, which are conferred by the state upon an artificial entity called the Company, consisting of individuals who have certain determined share interests in the common property and the common earnings. The voting power is regulated according to the interests held, counting by number of equal shares, not by the number of individuals. The practical evil which experience has shown to be involved in corporate organisation, so far as the relations of its own members *inter sese* is concerned, has been the same evil which always attends the consolidation of power in the hands of a few, namely, the disregard of the interests of those who have less power. This can readily be done when the controlling interest in the corporation is acquired by a small number of individuals who work together. The others are to a great degree at the mercy of these few. The law, however, does in theory protect minority shareholders against fraud, and against the diversion of their money to other uses than those contemplated at the organisation of the corporation. But means of evading the law are too readily found; so that often the spectacle is presented of the entire loss of their invested money by the smaller, and the enrichment of the larger holders through the action of the corporate government. This is very grievous, and all the protection that the law can give ought to be given to prevent such abuses; but no regulation can ever be devised which will be perfect when the disposition to defraud or to dominate is present. But the fact that these things do happen in the case of corporations is not without some compensating advantages to the general public. They call attention to the power of those in control of corporations to work iniquities of all sorts and thus create a counteracting force.

Of this there is certainly need. For the great public evil which has arisen from the success of corporate organisations is their ability to crush out competition, and even to control the powers of government for their own uses. Both of these have actually become in many places evils of serious dimensions.

There can be no doubt of the legitimate authority of government to control corporations to the fullest extent. They have no powers except what are conferred. Usurpations and acts *ultra vires* can be prevented theoretically. The laws are broad enough. The trouble lies in the paralysis of the arm of the government by the fact that agents of the corporation constitute a part of the government, and use their delegated governmental powers for the benefit of their corporation ; or that the corporation overawes or bribes the legislature, the executive, or the judiciary, or all together. This evil, it is plain to see, is not one which can be cured by legislation. No matter how ingenious enactments may be devised, they will not meet the case. They will only drive the disease from one place to another, or force it from the surface to work havoc more secretly within.

The best remedy is that of the 'Charmides' of Plato, namely, 'curing the soul.' Raising the level of moral excellence is the only thing which can sweep away these obstructions to the general welfare. I do not say this with the implication that nothing can be accomplished by legislation, but to call attention to the fact that about all that can be done has been done, and that instead of devoting their force to tinkering the laws people would do much better to be promoting within their sphere of action the execution of the laws in letter and spirit. This they can do by carefully watching the progress of events ; by nominating, supporting, and voting for men for official station who are incorruptible ; by exposing corrupt schemes ; by attending to their own duties as citizens, and, last but not least, by looking well after their own individual righteousness in all the relations of life.

The great security against corporate domination lies in publicity. There is hence a very considerable advantage for the public in a complete system of supervision of corporations by boards clothed with authority to examine records, take testimony of individuals, and generally to investigate the acts of corporate bodies. But much more than any supervisory commission can effect is susceptible of being done by journalism as at present organised. The remark was made in an earlier chapter (Chapter XI.) to the effect that the

journal, as a *newspaper*, a gatherer of all the facts of social life, is incomparably the most efficient educational instrument of to-day in aid of public and private morality. The justice of this observation can be vindicated. Much exception is often taken at modern, particularly American, journalistic methods of investigating with great pertinacity, and publishing relentlessly, the most personal facts of individual conduct, both in its domestic, commercial, and public relations. But though there may be excessive zeal the general method ought not to be hastily condemned. Just precisely this habit of prying into everything, unearthing every secret combination, discovering the hidden wickedness, throwing the light of day upon all the working in darkness, is the most admirable and effective check upon the sinister purposes of those who fear not courts nor legislatures, to be sure, but do, and always will, tremble when their thoughts and deeds are held up in full detail before the gaze of all the community. Of course a newspaper may be suborned, but not all newspapers; and in the event of active competition even the suborned paper scarcely dares to suppress facts that others have brought out, while its hired character soon becomes itself a matter of publicity.

In support of whatever means may be taken to repress corporate transgressions, the composite character of the corporation itself will be of much assistance. Internal competitions and rivalries will be likely to occur, and, if occurring, will accrue to the public benefit. Although the cohesive forces may be stronger than the disintegrating, the latter are still present, and are liable to increase as the maleficent action of the corporate body upon the public weal increases. For though corporations have no soul, occasionally some member of the corporation has. At any rate, the members of the corporation themselves have interests outside of the corporation. They wish their property and lives to be secure, and thus they must be supporters of the social system, though sometimes blinded by their own assent to the injury they are doing to themselves and theirs. Moreover, malcontents within the organisation will not be slow to hold up to view the sins of their opponents; so that, altogether, the checks upon corporate despotism are not so few as many people suppose. Counteracting forces are all the while at work, and, though alertness on the part of the citizen is to be encouraged, it need not be thought that nothing is being done if some change of law is not being successfully urged.

The contrast to the corporation which the trade union presents

is quite a remarkable one; and yet there are many points of resemblance, while the evils flowing from the two are of the same general character. The fallacies of the co-operative idea are common to all its developments. The trade union is organised (generally speaking) to resist the tyranny of capital over labour. The means proposed are : first, deliberation, to determine what are the best measures to be taken ; and, secondly, concerted action in accordance with the result of the deliberation. The focal point of the action of these societies is the question of wages ; although hours of labour, the kind of work, and various police regulations are often made the subject of consideration, as also the different races of the labourers themselves. Now, as in the instance of the corporation, two great classes of evils of trade-unionism arise from despotism within, and, after centralisation, using the acquired power in disregard of the rights of others without. But in the case of the trade union there is a great danger, which is not so common in the other case, namely, the lack of intelligence to govern action.

To make the trade union of value to the labourer, the union must know what the true interests of the labourer are. Here is usually difficulty at the outset. Workmen are not political economists, nor are their leaders. They are not sufficiently educated to know when they are committing suicide. In view of this fact, free interchange of views, calm and careful discussion of plans, and methods of putting them into execution are of transcendent importance. But the rule is the other way. Their discussions consist of excited, inflammatory, rhetorical harangues calculated to arouse passion, not to put reason at work. The calm and sober man who attempts to express his views is cried down. Indeed he is fortunate if he escape being knocked down. Very frequently no discussion is allowed, but—especially in those organisations which are secret—the word of command is sent down from the highest to the lowest to be obeyed without question. When this last condition arises, there has come the extreme evil of co-operative organisation which we have already so much insisted upon.

The tyranny which prevents free deliberation is also operative to prevent free action. The few, who have intimidated the many into resolving upon a certain course, now terrorise them into carrying it out. If a strike be ordered, woe be to him who does not join in what his society has decreed ! Not only confidence is withdrawn, but too often there is the sad story of violence, frequently

of a shocking and barbarous character, and not seldom terminating in murder. Thus, through the iron rule of an oligarchical society, the labourer finds a much worse fate than he encounters under the despotic commands of capital.

Upon those outside the society this wickedness of co-operative supremacy also results in the most baleful consequences. The same reign of terror which is maintained to keep in subjection those within is employed to coerce those without into joining their forces with those of the society. Workmen who prefer to judge and act for themselves, and who see that their interest and the welfare of their families lie in an opposite course, meet with the unqualified wrath of the organisation, and suffer substantial wrongs to a deplorable degree. To some classes the privilege of uniting with the society is not allowed, but a war of extermination is waged against them. Such is the hostility of organised labour against those labourers who are willing to supply the market at lower rates than are maintained by the organisations. The war against the Chinese in America is a very pointed example of this. In the summer of 1885, at Rock Springs, in the territory of Wyoming, under the instigation and leadership of the Knights of Labour, a co-operative organisation, an attack was made upon a community of Chinese labourers while they were preparing to migrate in obedience to the demands of the organisation. Their houses were burned, and about fifty men, women, and children were massacred without mercy, while further outrage was only prevented by the arrival of a military force. This is the most recent of many similar barbarities, and is only a sample. If, therefore, people believe that the cause of labour is to be benefited by labour organisations, they must always recollect that they paralyse the efforts in their behalf and alienate the sympathies of those whose help they need most, thus immeasurably retarding the accomplishment of their own purposes, unless they recognise the rights of individuals as such both within and without the organised union.

Notwithstanding these ill consequences of labour co-operation, the organisation of labourers is not to be discouraged if it can be kept within bounds, difficult though this appears to be. But it does seem as if the most intelligent of labouring men who read the newspapers and have a tolerable education must at least apprehend the prudence both of moderation in action and the diffusion of knowledge by real, not pretended, deliberation in council. Here again we encounter the old trouble—the evil disposition ; and the



labourer's soul is not less hard to cure than that of the capitalist. But wisdom comes by experience ; and as the influences of discussion outside the organisation cannot be cut off, however much such discussion may be repressed within, truth is likely sooner or later to permeate even the most despotic society, and tend to disintegrate its centralised power. If labour unions could be maintained under the guidance of a clear intelligence, a willingness to accord to all others the freedom they claim for themselves, and a disposition to work by means of the constructive rather than the destructive forces, they would be of immense advantage to the labouring classes, and indeed of no little value to society in general.

Our present aim has been again to illustrate and confirm the truth that the altruistic disposition is not attained or encouraged by any increase of restriction upon individual spontaneity or autonomy ; and that without the altruistic disposition all accumulation of power by extreme compression of the intelligence and will of individuals is always vanity and vexation of spirit, while with this disposition such accumulation is not needed. In this view, while labour organisations may still legitimately and effectively influence the rate of wages by combined effort—indeed, as Mr. Rae says, being able to convert the question of wages from the question how little the labourer can afford to take into the question how much the employer is able to give—more stress, I conceive, ought to be laid upon the educational and philanthropic work which such associations are competent to do. There is nothing so efficacious to make people understand the advantages of altruism as to induce them to practise a little. Instead of beating those who refuse to participate in strikes, if the trade union would do something more toward insuring those who suffer by the tyranny both of capital and labour, better results would flow. Sometimes this is done, but it ought to be more general. Brentano's doctrines ought to be preached and put into practice. 'The working class must insure themselves against all the risks of their life by association, just as they must keep up the rate of wages by association ; and for the same reasons—first, because they are able to do so under existing economical conditions ; and second, because it is only as the end can be gained consistently with the modern moral conditions of their life, i.e. with the maintenance of their personal freedom, equality, and independence.' If the working classes sought by union to gather together funds for such insurance, as well as for educational

<sup>1</sup> *Contemporary Socialism*, chap. v.

purposes, and would devote them conscientiously to such uses, they would find the treasury very often largely increased by the voluntary contribution of those of the capitalist class who now assist the labourer much less than they are inclined to, because they see that their assistance only furnishes the means for oppression and devastation.

PART VI.

THE ROOT OF MORAL EVIL.

‘It seems clear to me, if I do not deceive myself, that the desire of domination and of possessing superiority over their fellows is so natural to men, that, as a general rule, those are few indeed in number who really love liberty so well that, if they had the opportunity of making themselves lords or masters of their fellow citizens, they would not seek to do so. . . . If, then, you will consider attentively the conduct of those who live together in one and the same city, and will observe the dissensions which arise among them, you will find that the object in view is superiority over each other rather than liberty. . . . Thus, those who fill the foremost social positions in a city do not strive after liberty, but are ever seeking to increase their own power and to insure their own superiority and pre-eminence. They endeavour, indeed, so far as it is in their power, to conceal their ambition under this plausible name of liberty; because, inasmuch as there are in any city many more who fear to be oppressed than those are who can hope to become oppressors, he has many more adherents who seems to stand forward as the champion of equality than he who should openly aim at superiority.’

GUICCIARDINI, *Del Reggimento di Firenze*.

‘Act according to that maxim whose universality as law thou canst at the same time will.’—KANT, *Metaphysic of Ethics*.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*THE EGOISTIC IDEAL.*

THE course of our discussions has been gradually bringing us back to the point from which we set out. We originally found the source of moral evil to be the choices of individuals (Chapter III.). The problem which then presented itself, in addition to questions of the avoidance of physical evil, was how to affect the choices of individuals so as to cause them to pursue and promote good rather than evil. We endeavoured to show wherein the inculcation of a belief that every man stands justly condemned in the sight of an All-Perfect Being, instead of being efficacious for such a purpose, is positively mischievous, and itself productive of more evil than it can prevent. We in like manner contended that a sentiment of inherent authority in any social institution is a harm rather than a help. Again, we essayed to point out that systems of co-operation, unless established and maintained with important limitations, are productive of more evil than good, and at best cannot of themselves secure the good-will, which Kant asserted to be the only unconditioned Good. But in all this discussion, though we declared the doctrine of sin to be a superstition, the notion of authority in institutions to be a fetich, and the co-operative idea in its extremes to be a fallacy, and throughout all strenuously urged the paramount value, and indeed necessity, of the independence and autonomy of the individual; yet I do not think we have ever obscured the truth that egoism in the individual character is the root of all moral evil. Now, after the adverse criticisms passed upon doctrines and measures which are avowedly proposed as means for the reduction of evil in the world, it is incumbent upon us to emphasise once more our own notion of where lies the greatest obstruction in the way of the elimination of evil, and to say what we can as to the relief. That obstruction is the individual egoistic disposition and character.

It must have occurred to the reader, in perusing the last

two preceding Parts of this work especially, that everywhere the most alarming development of egoism is found in a lust of dominion. Historically, the worst egoists have been the patriarchs, emperors, kings, princes, and popes—those in power; and the effort to secure and preserve power has led to more woe in the world than anything else we can observe. It may be worth our while, therefore, for a moment to trace the course of development of this eagerness for supremacy over one's fellows.

Since the beginning and the continuance of life depend upon incessant motion and resistance to motion, it is unavoidable that the exercise of force should be the primary idea connected with the preservation of individual existence. Thence this idea extends to development, for the preservation of an organism subsists only in its development. Activity must be put forth; and inasmuch as there is always resistance, the overcoming of obstacles is the first lesson to be learned. To live, it is necessary to work; while work means struggle. Primarily, man is prompted to subdue material nature and utilise natural forces for his ends. This activity, this work, this struggle, an abundance of vitality makes to a very considerable degree pleasurable.

The social state of mankind, indeed, creates another sphere for individual activity, but still one in which the exercise of force and the idea of resistance are primitive notions. If we suppose a first man, who never had seen another of his kind, what would be his emotions and inclinations upon such a sight? Our actual knowledge of man under primitive conditions does not allow us to suppose that they would be social. It is more probable that they would be of such a nature as to impel him to catch, appropriate, and use the newcomer in the same manner as he would use inanimate objects, or, better, other animal life, assuming him to be familiar with this at best. Resistance would provoke conflict, so that war would in all likelihood be the earliest experience of human beings with each other. This supposition is borne out by what facts we possess.

Yet a modifying influence must have come in very early. The social desires would soon make their appearance, especially in connection with sexual promptings. They would arise even from captivity of slaves; and in these two classes of appetites, the Predatory and the Social, are found the germs from which springs the whole growth of super-organic evolution. The inclinations towards social life are so strong that they prevent human beings

from living in isolation. But still the value of society to the individual is originally dependent almost wholly upon his ability to use others for his own happiness. Thus his social activity becomes directed toward essentially selfish purposes, qualified only by the inability to obtain society at all without some concessions to others. Social life is a necessity, but it nevertheless is a life of struggle and contention of man with his fellows.

After such considerations as these the genesis of an egoistic ideal is not mysterious. As intellect emerges from its embryonic existence, with the increase of reminiscent power goes an increased ability and disposition to form ends of attainment. They grow more and more comprehensive and far-reaching, and contemplate action extending over longer and longer periods. Thus there is evolved with greater or less distinctness an ideal of life, with its attendant notions of what constitutes good, and what ought to be the objects of effort and activity; succeeding in the attainment of which, life is constituted a success; failing in which, life, in the judgment of the individual cherishing such an ideal, becomes a failure. Under the circumstances just referred to this ideal naturally becomes one of power attained, or to be attained, in some one of various forms. Begotten of experiences of activity put forth and resistance met with, of this resistance overcome, and enjoyments of the fruits of victory, the desirable in the social sphere comes to be associated with imaginations of self as triumphing over one's fellows, transcending them, surpassing them, capturing them, controlling them, using them for one's own ends, irrespective of their own status as persons. Under such an ideal, success in life means overcoming other men and securing power over them.

This is not, however, the only form of the egoistic ideal. Man does not always nor for ever covet activity. The desire for action alternates with that for repose, and as life proceeds the latter often becomes decidedly ascendant. Sometimes it is so from the beginning. When it is supervened upon the egoistic ideal of activity, it satisfies itself in the results of its triumphs, and finds its end in preserving and enjoying what it has gained, regardless still of the welfare of others, near or far. Devotion to sensual enjoyments from the outset works the same result. An ideal of life is created whose chief end is ease, luxury, and satiety. To its devotees, 'Eat, drink, and be merry' comprises their 'theory of practice.' To such toil seems a waste, the incurring of peril a foolishness, the

glories of great achievement but vanity. Yet obliviscence and disregard of one's fellow-mortals is just as conspicuous, though in different fashion, as under the other form of individual egoism. A sybaritic ideal of life is less baneful than the variety of ideal which appears in the lust for dominion, for its evil is negative. It is not of necessity exclusively egoistic, though apt to issue in egoism. Its hurtfulness appears in the indifference which it creates to the welfare of others. It prevents the formation of a disposition actively to assist human beings when they need it. It will cause the adoption of the sentiment expressed in Clough's 'New Decalogue'—

Thou shalt not kill, but need'st not strive  
Officiously to keep alive.

Such a sentiment, though not actively destructive to the social system, is passively injurious. It weakens the cohesive force and causes society to fall asunder.

We will now proceed to trace generally the evils which the egoistic ideal in these two forms develops and maintains in the social organism.



## CHAPTER XXV.

*THE MILITANT SYSTEM.*

As before remarked, war appears to have been historically the earliest outcome of the social state; and the reason for this has been noticed. That war is destructive of society between combatants is sufficiently evident; that defensive war, or resistance to aggression, may sometimes be necessary in order to preserve society, is also clear. That, when war occurs, somebody begins the conflict; that the strife begun, those who originally acted on the defensive do not usually stop with defence, but, if they succeed, are elated and stimulated to become themselves aggressors, are likewise patent facts. Hence wars are apt to beget further war, to the great damage of the social system. If all men had been determined that no blow should ever be struck except in answer to one already inflicted and another threatened, of course there never would have been any war at all. But men begin conflict, and when they have repelled attack deem themselves licensed to destroy and kill to satisfy their own predatory appetites. The activities employed in defence are not satisfied with defence. Success in war makes war seem a good thing, to be followed as an exercise of activity.

The egoistic ideal of activity for acquiring power is both a cause and an effect of militant social systems. Considering the present existence of such systems, there can be no doubt that they favour an ideal of life which makes success to consist very largely in the triumphs of the soldier. Glory, the winning of battles, the accomplishment of deeds of prowess, form the chief ambition of him who follows the military calling. It is obvious, though not so often considered, that whatever success is achieved in such a career is worked out only through a series of events which bring ruin to many, involving terrible destruction of both property and life. It is evident also that no man can be a great soldier without actual campaigning. The very existence of large bodies of men trained to a military career itself has a tendency to create war, for such

men must, and will, have occupation. This is hence a standing menace to social order.

Nor is the greater likelihood of war where the profession of arms is encouraged by any means the only evil. From war has come absolutism, and by it is absolutism sustained. The first ruler was the military chief; and out of armed conflict sprang the *imperator*. Despotism in all its forms is a direct consequence of the militant system. Every government which denies equal rights to all men receives its chief support from and is primarily beholden for its maintenance to militarism.

So much has been said by writers of all sorts—political, ethical, and religious—respecting the immorality, the iniquity, and the uselessness of war, and also concerning the evils of despotic government, that it would be wholly superfluous for me in this treatise to consider at length these topics. But I desire to point out that any order of things which favours the profession of arms as a career beyond the necessities of actual defence is a very serious obstruction to the full development of the altruistic character. As mentioned in another place (Chapter XV.), the sympathies of the soldier must necessarily be deadened by his calling; and as just now remarked, whatever success he achieves means desolation and death to some others. If, therefore, we are possessed with earnest desires to abate the evil existing in the world, it ought to be a cardinal principle of action always to discourage any sentiment which favours the continuance of the militant system, or which attaches to the military profession any other or greater honour than comes from the exigency (happily growing rarer) of purely defensive warfare. And until wars cease and standing armies are no longer deemed a necessity for security against foreign enemies or as supporters of domestic government, it is safe to say that no altruistic millennium will have arrived.

We have noted the fact that there is a strong feeling in the civilised world against autocratic government. This often prevails also in opposition to aristocracies and privileged classes of all kinds. On the other hand, we have also noticed that, on the part of the governing and privileged classes, any attempt to change the existing order is regarded as the worst of crimes. To determine how and when attempts to overthrow constituted governmental authority are ethically justifiable is one of the most difficult questions. Just at the present time the warfare against monarchical governments seems to be waged chiefly by the methods of the

assassin. No doubt there is to some extent secret approbation upon the part of law-abiding people of attempts that have been made upon the lives of those high in authority; and very probably it is to a degree in reliance upon justification of this sort that such attempts have been made. But surely there is no principle of morality which can sanction murder, whether committed by the sovereign upon the subject, or by the subject upon the sovereign. Nor is there complete security to any citizen of the state when secret and stealthy assassination is esteemed praiseworthy. Nihilism and dynamitism are as dangerous to the people as to the prince. No real reform ever can be effected merely by destruction, whether individuals are singled out, or there is a blind and promiscuous slaughter. The result will be, if such attempts are persisted in, that the people will rally to the support of the sovereign as the standard-bearer in a battle of order against chaos, law against crime, stability against insecurity to life and property. Thus the cause of liberty and equal rights, instead of being advanced, will be retarded in its progress, thrown into disrepute, and the encroachments of despotism facilitated.

But in the midst of our condemnation of nihilistic methods we ought neither to be insidiously seduced into supporting the doctrine that 'the king can do no wrong,' nor fail to remember that times may arise when revolution is justifiable, if entered into soberly and with the methods of law and order. In such a manner the American Revolution of 1776 was begun and carried forward. Kings and princes are not independent of law; and if they override law simply because they have the power to do so, whatever right to rule they have is justly forfeited. Their offences may go unpunished from fear on the part of the people to proceed against them; but, ethically, if a movement took place in such a direction it would be hard to refuse our justification. It may be said that such a concession would lead logically to sanctioning the principles of the dynamiteur. There would be no force, however, in such an objection; for a deliberate, considered, consentient movement of a body of people toward a definite end is a very different thing from the secret plotting and the destructive acts of men who have not the courage either to announce their principles or to avow or stand by the consequences of their deeds. We can admire and even justify to ourselves Charlotte Corday or Brutus; but we can find neither admiration nor justification for the masked murderer, who, without word or sign, stabs his victim, then flees from the sight of

men and seeks to hide himself in the midnight gloom. It is possible that averring the responsibility of rulers to law may sometimes lead to the assumption by individuals of the right to inflict punishment for what they conceive to be violations on the part of the sovereign of fundamental principles of law and justice. I have mentioned two instances in point of fact, and others will suggest themselves to the reader. It is even possible that the nihilist and dynamiteur may found his secret organisation upon the basis of principles like those enunciated in the American Declaration of Independence. The livery of heaven is often stolen for the devil's service. But I do not hesitate to say that these things are less dangerous than the prevalence of the notion that any ruler, administrator, or governor is infallible, or that he is responsible only to the Almighty for his acts. He is responsible directly to the society of which he is a member, and indirectly to the rest of mankind. This is a truth which no considerations ought to be deemed sufficient to obscure.

If evil is to be eliminated or materially reduced in the world, the whole militant system, root and branch, as a system of social organisation, and as furnishing ends of activity, must be subordinated completely to a better order, based upon higher ideals of human character, broader views of what really constitutes the chief good in life, and a more genuine and symmetrical altruism.

Although the sybaritic ideal is found influencing conduct under militant systems, it is not therein so prominent or so dangerous a form of egoism as the lust for power. Its characteristics and its effects are no different from what they are under the industrial systems; and accordingly we will defer what I have to say respecting this egoistic vice to the following chapters.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

*ACTIVE EGOISM IN THE INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM.*

THE decay of the militant system before an industrial civilisation is very apparent, and a still further decadence may not unreasonably be expected. The most who will read these pages live in the midst of a social order which is at least predominantly industrial in its character. The career of the soldier, although an honourable one, is not esteemed the first or the best occupation for him who would achieve the highest success in life; and military glory no longer commands the enthusiasm or the interest that it uniformly did in the past. Other ends of activity have risen into greater prominence, and the soldier has neither the power nor is awarded the consideration of bygone days.

But if militarism be waning, the egoistic ideal of victory and dominion has not departed, but survives in modified forms, though unchanged in its essential character. Success in life means power over one's fellows, victory by raising one's self over a fallen competitor. And it is the prevalence of this ideal, the persistence in conduct inspired by it, that constitutes the chief obstruction to the elimination of evil from the most enlightened civilisations of the present age. Its effects we have already considered in several directions; but there is something more to be said, especially respecting individual character and conduct in the ordinary business relations of life.

Strict justice is the proper rule for governmental action in all cases. Rights are to be preserved and enforced. But the government, as before said, is not an original source of activity or life: it is an artificial creation with delegated powers, whose purpose is to maintain the common freedom and secure to everyone the free exercise of his activity. The individual forms his ends, pursues them, regulates his conduct by them, restricted only (except as self-restrained) by the requirements of the common liberty. Now when this common freedom exists in its greatest perfection, the

individual is very apt to consider that if he forms an ideal of his own aggrandisement, attained within the limits allowed by the common liberty, he has complied with all social requirements, and there ought to be nothing but praise and honour for his success. All the victories which he can gain in competition with others are legitimate, and if liberty is allowed to all, at least each man must look out for himself. Success in life is the achievement of the individual's own personal ends, which bear little relation to the advancement of any others or the promotion of their happiness.

Where the paternal and fostering action of government is removed or reduced to the minimum, throwing on individuals the burden of working out their own fortune, the stimulus to competitive effort is very great. To an extent of course this is healthy. We have seen what would be some of the ill-effects of suppressing competition. But in all the great commercial and industrial centres, that which originally is advantageous becomes hurtful from excess. A character intrinsically selfish is produced, and a morality in business dealings to which altruism is utterly foreign.

In fact, as we view the great commercial societies, we must, I think, concede that the theory and practice of business transactions between men is almost absolutely egoistic. To buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest, to exercise skill in the selection of commodities and in the disposition of them according to the laws of supply and demand, is not the whole of the matter. It is inculcated as a maxim of sound business policy to take advantage of the weakness of your adversary, with as little regard to the consequences to him as the soldier in battle is regardless of the effect upon the man he strikes down. Who ever considers, in making a bargain or enforcing it, the consequences to the other party? That is *his* business! '*Caveat emptor!*' is the sentiment. Business is business, and charity and benevolence are outside matters.

That the consequences of business victories are often appalling to the party at a disadvantage is perfectly apparent. They depress his energies, annihilate his hopes, take away subsistence from himself and his family, and actually crush out his life. He is often ruined socially, mentally, morally, and physically; while the man who ruins him goes to church and teaches his Sunday-school pupils to love their neighbours as themselves!

I do not intend to say that these evils always befall a man

who gets the worst of a trade or a course of dealings ; nor do I mean to aver that a desire to make a profit from one's transactions is not legitimate. If it were not, commerce and trade would soon cease altogether. But what I do deprecate and condemn is the principle that the trader or the operator is bound in business only to consider himself and his own interest, and has no moral responsibility for the effects of his own acts. And that from just such a theory as this ruin abundantly flows to many individuals does not admit of question.

It will doubtless seem ridiculous to the average business man to be told that he has any concern *in his business* but to make money. The value of philanthropy he will recognise ; he will be kind to his family, benevolent to his neighbour, perhaps, by pecuniary contributions, a supporter of charitable institutions ; but there arises the limit of his altruistic vision. In his counting-house he is hard, merciless, uncompromising. He is in another world, in a sphere where charity is out of place. Practically, then, to him business is war.

Certainly the christian religion does not sanction this doctrine. Numbers of those who practically follow it are adherents of christianity and profess to adopt the christian teachings. Though they are taught better things, they grow callous to the lessons of the pulpit ; or if their conscience suffers they esteem a liberal contribution to the plate or box to be sufficient atonement for their sins, and resume their evil practices on the morrow. But it does seem surprising how little effect the repeated and reiterated precepts of the New Testament, supported by a wealth of illustration, and enforced with great eloquence, has upon the business morals of church congregations.

The foundation of all commercial dealings is the idea of exchange on equal terms. The minds of the buyer and seller meet upon the conviction on the part of the buyer that (to him) what he gets is at least equivalent to what he gives, and on the part of the seller that what he receives is (to him) equal to what he parts with. In the most primitive form of trade each party brings his goods, exposes them to view, and an exchange is negotiated. It often happens, of course, that what the buyer gets is of much more value to him than to the seller, or, conversely, that the price paid is of more value to the seller than the goods parted with. This springs from the different circumstances of individuals or from their different degrees of knowledge ; and out of this fact arise the

laws of supply and demand, which largely determine market value. In addition, the natural value of articles themselves has its influence, depending partly upon their rarity and partly upon the cost of producing them, including in the latter the expense of bringing to market.

It cannot be expected that every trader will furnish eyes or brains for the other party to the trade. Nor can it be reasonably required that before he concludes the bargain he make an inquiry into the other's circumstances with a view of determining whether or not the trade will also be advantageous for the latter. But it can be demanded, and the social interest demands it, that a person shall not deliberately and knowingly take advantage of the necessities of the other party, or of his ignorance, to get what he receives without giving the fair, usual, normal equivalent in exchange. The moral law exacts this. But the readiness to take this advantage is one of the commonest features of business; and the promptness displayed in resenting any criticism of such action shows the extent to which the refusal to admit altruistic principles into business practice has gone. Yet the hardship which often occurs by reason of this refusal is very apparent. And where the necessity which gives the advantage is created by the efforts of him who profits thereby, the injustice is very gross. This is exemplified in the instances where 'corners' in grain or other commodities are effected by purchasing as much as possible of all the existing stock. To be sure, sometimes and under some conditions speculation is advantageous to the common weal. Mill, for instance, contends<sup>1</sup> that while some speculators do enrich themselves it is by the losses of other speculators alone, the whole course of transactions being rather to the advantage of the general public. But, on the other hand, the distress which speculative operations cause is often widespread and terrible; while at least every successful attempt to create an artificial scarcity which shall bring ruin and woe upon others, is as devilish as it would be to lead them into a chamber of tortures and then extort a heavy price of release.

Morality cannot lay down in advance an imperative rule for every case. But it does put upon the individual an obligation of humanity and social duty to have an altruistic consideration of the effects of his business action; to abate his eagerness for profit and success when he is bringing suffering upon other people; if he

<sup>1</sup> *Political Economy*, Book IV. chap. ii.



has any christianity to take it along to his counting-house, and if he has none to get some and bring it there. The disregard of this obligation, not alone in practice but in theory also, is a very serious evil of the day. We actually find the doctrine that business is war furnishing the standards of business morality. In the face of the general principle of all social ethics, namely, that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is to be secured, in the face of the general recognition of the Golden Rule, as the true precept of conduct, in the midst of general philanthropy and high intelligence, we are confronted with the methods of the cut-throat not alone put into practice but sanctioned by common sentiment within the whole sphere of business dealings between man and man!

It is an inevitable result of such a system of belief and of procedure that the notion that all is fair in war comes to pervade the commercial struggle. The passage from negative and indirect to positive and direct fraud is easy. Fraud in all its forms becomes prevalent, unchecked save by the laws, means of evading which ingenuity will readily supply. And there is much so insidious that the tribunals cannot detect or establish it even if suspected. There is a wide range within which intelligent selfishness, intent only on its own aims, can operate with success. The sharpness which is so common among business men, and which indeed is so necessary in a business career, bears ample witness to the existence of common practices of deceit, petty and grand cheating, rogueries and rascalities of all sorts and descriptions, contrary to the spirit of fair dealing, though perhaps just beyond the reach of the law. That such a condition must also be fruitful in crime, ever and anon breaking out, is not only a reasonable anticipation but is an abundantly verified fact.

Finally, the outcome of this push and scramble conducted by force and fraud, in which it is understood from the outset that the devil takes the hindmost, is that certain individuals emerge, seared, scarred, and hardened, having in their possession wealth and the power which wealth gives, holding thereby a control over their fellows in greater or less degree, and enjoying a greater or less monopoly of many of the good things of life; while of those whom they have surpassed some are still in the midst of toil and struggle, some are hopelessly thrown out and past the chance of recovery, while others are dead, destroyed by the fierceness of the contest and the sense of their own failure. This is not a pleasant picture of industrial society, but it is not overdrawn. Everyone knows

that the situation might even be painted in more vivid colours without doing violence to actual truth. It would be strange if this were to remain the prevailing form of social life. But the important point to make is, that if this is to be, we might as well abandon the altruistic principle altogether and revert to barbarism ; for unless the egoistic tendencies are sufficiently modified and held in check to abate this selfishness in industrial competition, there will presently come a disruption, and anarchy will ensue. This result, however, we will consider further in the next chapter.

It is desirable to note, in addition to the foregoing observations, that the possession which the egoistic ideal of power is allowed to take of the individual mind leads to oppression of those whose assistance is necessary as labourers and servants to carry out the plans of a master. The strife between capital and labour is evidence of this. The more power is assured and accumulated in the hands of any one person not influenced by altruistic dispositions, the fewer concessions is he disposed to make, and the less value is he inclined to attach to the services of those whom he uses. He crowds down the wages of labour to the utmost, and heaps up his contempt upon the labouring man. He thinks no more of the latter than he does of his cattle, and is just as ready to sacrifice the one as the other. The relation between himself and his employés is the feudal relation ; absolute fealty is expected ; and it is also expected that the servant will be content with whatever grace the lord condescends to bestow. Some protection of the employé is necessary. The horse must have shelter, food, and rest, else he soon ceases to be of use to his owner. But beyond the idea of securing the greatest amount of benefit to himself the favour and beneficence of the master does not extend. The idea that the servant is an independent personality, to be respected, and whose ends as person the master is bound to promote in and by virtue of the relationship between them, is so foreign to the mind of the superior in power, that to suggest it would be deemed preposterous. Thus, far beyond any necessities of self-preservation and proper development the egoistic ideal and its dispositions induce such a disregard of the pleasure of others that even the maintenance of power over others as dependents, and the increase of power by putting down and keeping down other human beings in a condition of subjection, seem the most desirable objects of activity and effort, and the mind is satisfied with nothing else.

Fortunately, in most industrial civilisations competition ex-

tends so far that those who have secured great power are subjected to constant attrition from others near them in position, and are obliged to resort to every means and to have every care lest their possessions slip away. This fact often enures to the advantage of the lower class; for the dominant, spite of his domination, is after all in great degree dependent upon the servient. Unless the latter be conciliated his services may suddenly be transferred to a rival. In order to preserve power, therefore, larger concessions must be made. The more the competition the better it is for those who are striving to work upward. It would seem, therefore, that competition carries along the remedy for its own evils.

Undoubtedly this is true to a partial extent. But a most serious and formidable difficulty here arises. Where there are rivals in positions of vantage, the idea soon occurs to them to make peace, arrange terms of union, combine their forces, and form an alliance of wolves against the lambs. Thus the power of each is largely increased to mutual advantage. Hence the social idea is made use of to promote ends which are essentially anti-social and predatory. The egoistic ideal is never abandoned, but altruism is embraced and practised for the very purpose of subserving the egoism and not an atom beyond. Repetitions of this process in an ever-widening circle have produced those most tremendous concentrations of power referred to in a former chapter (Chapter XXIII.), which have affected not merely industrial interests but also the whole machinery of governmental administration.

It will be seen, therefore, that the general situation resulting from the prevalent assumption and maintenance by individuals of the egoistic ideal of activity, even where military force is not employed or sanctioned either to gain or preserve power, presents the existence of an upper class possessed of wealth and influence, living in luxury, and oblivious to or contemptuous of the woes, the misfortunes, the ill-conditions of their fellow-beings, while below these subsists as best it may a much larger class of struggling men and women, supporting by their labour and through their sufferings the pomp and state of the wealthy; knowing, too, that the fruits of their work instead of profiting themselves chiefly contribute to swell the coffers of those above them. In such a situation the tendency is unavoidable for the pressure upon those at the bottom to grow heavier and more unbearable. Strangely enough, the tendency also is for those at the top to become more and more

inattentive and more callous to the sufferings of those underneath the press. If they have not gained the objects of their ambition, they fight on more fiercely, more pitilessly and uncompromisingly. If they have attained their purposes, or if energy begins to fail, their active egoism gives place to passive egoism and their ideal of life changes to the sybaritic. Let us now for a little pursue the movement of social forces when governed by this latter form of the egoistic ideal.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

*PASSIVE EGOISM IN THE INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM.*

It is natural for man to deny that he is his brother's keeper ; but if he occupies a position for the enjoyment of which he is indebted to society, he will after a time learn—by costly lessons it may be—that if he does not look after the interests of society, society will withdraw its support from him with very little ceremony. It is the neglect of this truth that has brought the most appalling catastrophes upon social organisations, oftentimes with the most startling suddenness, in the midst of a fancied security.

Human experience, after centuries of stupid and obstinate prejudice, resulting in awful cruelty and unspeakable woe—‘man’s inhumanity to man’—has demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that the only way to deal with fundamental appetites is to satisfy them or modify them by careful education in early years. They cannot be crushed out, for they are inherent in human nature. If a person is happy and contented he is less prone violently to disturb the peace of others. If, on the other hand, his primary wants are not satisfied, there is a perpetual gnawing and craving which stimulates him to inflict harm on those who are near. The starving man will not hesitate to steal or murder for the sake of food. Neither property nor person is safe with him. Injury is a question only of power, not a matter of restraint by moral sentiment on the one side or moral suasion on the other.

The denial of these primary appetites, and the fear of such denial, are indicated in the social condition of poverty—a condition painfully evident in all communities. The poor have not the means necessary to supply their present necessities, or else not enough to remove the fear of destitution. Often we observe actual want ; more frequently still, the other. Vast multitudes of people are unable to accumulate a reserve store sufficient to protect them against future distress. Hence they are all the while under pressure to satisfy the instincts and appetites of self-conservation. If

others oppose them, they are bound to commit injury of some sort, perhaps crime. The existence of poverty, then, must always be fruitful in the production of moral evil, and dangerous to that social order, obedience to which on the part of the citizens of the state King Archidamus used to call 'most honourable and most secure.' Wherever there is a class of people oppressed by poverty, and there exists anything under the control or in the possession of some by which the poverty of others might be relieved, moral evil must always arise. Egoism to the extent of self-preservation will risk life even against the most tremendous odds. Better to die quickly by violence than slowly with the tortures of starvation. You may destroy life indeed, but so long as life remains basic needs will be satisfied, if necessary by force and injury of another.

History everywhere confirms this view. I cannot but wonder that men have set themselves at work to invent theories of innate depravity, of a fall from perfection, of diabolical possession and influence, to account for the presence of evil, when on a calm survey of the facts of human constitution and of social and political history the real truth is so plain. All popular tumults and commotions disturbing the peace of society spring from the lower classes, the *sans culottes*. They are instigated very often by designing leaders; yet these latter do not furnish the power; they merely apply the match to fire the train. The force is the force of want, of poverty, of wretchedness. The lurid fires of revolution reveal as the demons of destruction the begrimed face of the workman, the toiler with his hands who has no hope for the morrow, the tattered and ragged form of the homeless beggar who has not where to lay his head, the wan pallid countenance of the woman whose babe has drawn its last breath for want of nourishment, the tawdry prostitute who knows that literally the wages of her sin is death. A ghastly company they are. They remind us of the Life-in-Death seen by Coleridge's Ancient Mariner. Hope having fled, faith also departs, and holy charity. They brandish the dagger, they whirl the firebrand, they speed the bullet, and before them crumble the monuments of wealth and luxury. They cause dust to return to dust. Property vanishes, blood flows, great names and great honours are ruthlessly smitten. Then at last we know

The glories of our birth and state  
Are shadows, not substantial things.

The record of the decline and fall of the great empires and civilisations of earth is invariably a story of destruction at the hands of the poor and miserable in revolt against the rich and prosperous. It is often said that Rome perished because of her vices. True, indeed, but not in the sense ordinarily understood. The most trustworthy investigations have shown that this great western power collapsed because Rome made herself a tyrant and supported her extravagant luxury at the expense of her colonies and rural dependencies. She taxed and impoverished the country to maintain the costly reckless lusts of the city. Hence, the provinces, drained of their resources, and hopeless of prosperity, had no motive to defend themselves or the city. Thus the capital became an easy prey to the northern barbarian, who came really as a liberator of the provinces. Rome grew rich from her tributaries, but killed the goose that laid the golden egg. She exhausted her supports and defenders. She certainly sinned against light. She knew the traditions of the rise and fall of earlier states. She had her own sages, and the wisdom of Greece was before her rulers and people. Three hundred years B.C. Plato had laid down in the *Laws* that immortal principle of state-craft :

‘In the next place,’ said the teacher of the Academy, ‘dealings between man and man require to be suitably regulated. The principle of them is very simple. Thou shalt not touch that which is mine if thou canst help, or remove the least thing which belongs to me without my consent; and may I, being of sound mind, do to others as I would they should do to me.’

This truth, so often forgotten or crushed to earth, always rises again, and the nations of them that are saved must ever be those who walk in its light.

We need not go back to Rome and Greece for illustrative example. Nor is it necessary to revert even to that most conspicuous phenomenon, the overthrow of the Bourbon dynasty by the French Revolution, to convince us that social disturbances are developed through the discontent of the lower and poorer classes of society. The record of crime in all countries at the present day demonstrates the fact. Breaches of trust are of course more common in the higher classes, because the irresponsible are seldom made trustees. But the large majority of criminal acts, especially of violence, will be found to have been perpetrated by those who have no security for a subsistence. Our criminal

classes, as a rule, are recruited from the unsuccessful, the poor, the despised. Said Juvenal :

Rarely they rise by virtue's aid, who lie  
Plunged in the depths of helpless poverty.

I do not mean to claim, of course, that the condition of poverty is the sole or the ultimate cause of moral evil, for I have already said enough to show the contrary, but only that it is a principal and most fruitful source of that evil. It is the social condition pre-eminently to be regarded by statesmen, practical philanthropists, and philosophers as the breeder of moral and social disease. To relieve and remove this baleful condition is of prime importance to the state. Here and there, indeed, we find cases of crime and manifest injury committed by the rich and powerful. But the overthrow of social order need not be expected to come directly from those who have something which they desire to keep. The man who has great possessions does not aim to produce social chaos. It is the one who has nothing to lose who esteems property to be robbery and human life of trifling consequence. The thoughtful mind, reflecting upon these facts, asks itself the question, Why does poverty exist? Is there not enough for all, so that the predatory appetites may be satisfied, and the social likewise? Cannot men exist and develop their natural activity without warring against society?

The ultimate reason why poverty is so general and why society is so much endangered thereby is not the shiftlessness and improvidence of the poor. It lies, I apprehend, in the rapacity of mankind, and the consequent over-accumulation of property and power in the hands of an aristocracy. Ignorance, debased habits, lack of industry, doubtless contribute to bring about and maintain the pauper condition; but the great trouble is that people who are possessed by these misfortunes and vices are not helped to stand and walk, but are struck down. It seems hopeless for them to struggle. People remain poor much more largely because other people prevent their rising from the pauper condition. It is idle to assert that where there is a will there is a way, when the same causes which are relentlessly operating to block up the way also crush the will. It is of no use to urge that if men are only frugal, industrious, and honest they will succeed. The fact is that sometimes they will and sometimes they will not. The condition of things ought to be such that they always should; but such is not



the condition of things. The weakest go to the wall because thrust and hurled there by the stronger. Many a man sufficiently determined to win his way and secure a competence is baffled at every turn, and finally, perhaps amid curses and jeers of his fellows, is beaten to the ground. Industry, frugality, and honesty in a vast number of cases are almost powerless in the strife for existence, especially in large cities, where the press is the most crushing. Moreover, intelligence is usually arrayed on the side of the rich, and against the poor. The odds are terrible. The power of wealth, the power of reputation, the power of knowledge, all combine in dreadful array to slaughter the weak and helpless, who have for their defence—what? Nothing, but the

Eternal spirit of the chainless mind.

Sometimes the courage of desperation in one or a few will avail against an army. Sometimes a David slays a Goliath. Here and there a Winkelried makes way for liberty by gathering into his bosom a sheaf of hostile spears. But the rule is well-nigh universal that the heaviest battalions win. And since the antagonism continues, the poor dashing themselves against those more fortunate, and the latter repelling and defeating them, the tendency is for the strong to grow stronger, the miserable to grow more wretched—for wealth to become concentrated, and poverty to become more hopeless. This is always a dangerous situation for the state.

The wealthy and the prosperous are usually reluctant to acknowledge that anybody is responsible for poverty but the poor. And so with respect to the moral evils springing from poverty, they are equally unwilling to consider that blame rests upon any person but the law-breaker. It is undoubtedly the case that laws for the protection of life, liberty, and property must be made and enforced. Order there must be, and infractions must be suppressed and punished. But when a man strikes him who by fraud guided by superior intelligence, or by oppression exercised through superior power, has injured the assailant, there is at least a question whether the assaulted has not something to account for to society. Society owes to itself, in its own interest, for the sake of justice and order, that the poor, the weak, the ignorant receive a better and more complete protection than those who are able to protect themselves. As a matter of fact their security is generally much less. If through pressure men commit wickedness, it is certainly

both just and rational to remove the pressure. It is very superficial to regard the criminal as the sole author of his crime; we must look to the conditions which impel to crime. We may be very sure that if the lower classes are rebellious to order there is something the matter with the higher classes. Unless we change the conditions, and thus remove the operating causes which produced the crime, we shall have repetitions of it. Those causes lie in the unequal distribution of property and the unjust discriminations as to liberty of individuals, involving too great power concentrated in one or a few, and too restricted a sphere of action for the many; and these in their turn spring from individual egoism.

If, therefore, anyone is disposed to consider that he has done enough for his fellow-men if he refrain from actively injuring them, and that after all the only satisfactory course to be followed is to enjoy present good, leaving the course of affairs to work itself out in its own way, I earnestly advise him to think on these things. The attitude of everyone is of consequence, and the more content that one is with his own passivity the more sure is the sign of danger. For he could scarcely rest in quiet with an untroubled conscience if he were not supported by a prevalent sentiment; and in the prevalence of such a sentiment there is great peril already. Disintegration is certainly going on, and no one can tell how soon violence may break up order. Hence, while active egoism is a more salient and conspicuous evil, passive egoism creates a dry rot from which the social fabric is liable suddenly to collapse with a crash.

I cannot avoid closing this chapter with a quotation from the discussion of the social question by John Rae, in the work already mentioned,<sup>1</sup> in which he significantly comments upon the far-seeing vision of De Tocqueville. This political philosopher, Mr. Rae remarks, has pointed out how remarkably democratic institutions 'nourish two powerful passions, either of which, if it got the mastery, would prove fatal to freedom. One is the love of equality. . . . "They will endure poverty, servitude, pauperism; but they will not endure aristocracy." The other is the unreined love of material gratification. . . . When a passion like this spreads from the classes whose vanity it feeds to the classes whose envy it excites, social revolution is at the gates; and this is one of De Tocqueville's gravest apprehensions in contemplating the advance of democracy. For, he says, the passion for material well-being

<sup>1</sup> *Contemporary Socialism*, Introduction.

has no check in a democratic community except religion, and if religion were to decline—and the pursuit of comfort undoubtedly impairs it—then liberty would perish. . . . It is impossible, therefore, in an age when the democratic spirit has grown so strong and victorious, to avoid taking some reasonable concern for the future of liberty, more especially as at the same time the sphere and power of government are being everywhere continually extended; the devotion to material well-being, and what is called material civilisation, is ever increasing; and religious faith, particularly among the educated and the working classes, is on the decline.'

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

*THE RELIEF.*

BEFORE dealing with what were considered by the writer to be the leading obstacles and hindrances in the way of the elimination of evil, there were indicated four general spheres of action within which, or lines along which, the work of abating evil must be prosecuted. And now that we have finished our own task of pointing out these obstructions to the realisation of our ideals of the social good, of clearing away misconceptions, and of showing that what is often esteemed essential is only accidental, that what many regard as an end is often only a means liable to be perverted, and when so perverted itself becomes an evil of magnitude—now that this has been accomplished, these four fields of activity again appear before us to be entered upon and worked by those willing to labour for the abatement of evil in society, under the guidance and direction of two complementary precepts, which, as our contention is, must for ever govern all effective effort for the elimination of evil and the consequent amelioration of mankind, namely:—

*First*, AIM AT THE MINIMUM OF EXTRINSIC RESTRAINT AND THE MAXIMUM OF LIBERTY FOR THE INDIVIDUAL.

*Secondly*, AIM AT THE MOST COMPLETE AND UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ALTRUISTIC CHARACTER.

If I have succeeded in securing the interest of the reader up to this point, it may be a surprise to him, perhaps a disappointment, and probably it will be the occasion of adverse criticism, that I here bring to a close this treatise on the Problem of Evil. With so much that is negative and so little that is positive in the way of exhibiting particular measures for the relief against evil, it may appear that after the travail of a mountain only a mouse has been brought forth. But if we go on from this position which we have now reached, let us see what we have before us. We have been endeavouring to compass the whole subject of evil generally, and not any one of its special forms. Our thought thus pursued has now

brought us to the threshold of many sciences and arts, comprehending, indeed, the entire field of human activity. First we have industrial science, demanding the application of the practical ethical principles we have tried to justify to questions of economics in a thousand and one arts, with extensions into various theoretical sciences. In the second place there is political science, embracing all the topics relating to government, law, jurisprudence, and some of those concerning political economy. In the third place is presented with equal claims philanthropic science, which is still inchoate, its data and its laws with respect to its ends not having yet been co-ordinated. Finally, we note educational science, with its numerous relations and its various departments—physical, intellectual, moral, æsthetic, religious. Into which one of these four great divisions of practical science shall we enter? To treat them all would require not one but many volumes, and to deal with any one would injure the effect of the generalisations we have already made. Accordingly we shall, I think, be justified in contenting ourselves for the present with the results attained, the author hoping that the process of elimination pursued in this book may have yielded some little positive truth as a residuum which may be of value to others who are pursuing their own work in the great departments of practical activity just named. But before closing there are some further remarks called for upon the application of the principles and precepts enunciated.

These remarks chiefly concern the relative value of the four methods in the production of the altruistic and the subjugation of the egoistic character, which we have found to be the most important practical social question; and this also has a direct bearing upon the subject of the last two chapters.

It cannot be denied that activity in the philanthropic and educational spheres is likely to be the most purely altruistic in motive and directly altruistic in its results, inasmuch as within them there is afforded less opportunity for the schemes of egoistic ambition. The statesman and the soldier, the inventor, or even the commercial promoter, may indeed display a very high degree of self-abnegation and greatly encourage altruism; but the theatre of their efforts is in each case one which nominally furnishes the greatest stimulus to selfish desires. However great may be the benefits which mankind derives from their activity, those benefits usually are indirect, the direct end of the person's efforts being his own aggrandisement. This does not fulfil the moral law. Yet even

where a man is primarily anxious to do that which will promote his own super-eminence or pecuniary profit in a political career, whether civil or military, it not seldom happens that the individual is greatly inspired by ideals of the benefits to others which his labours may confer. The approbation of others depends upon this result; and this approbation ordinarily enters very largely into the emoluments of fame—a good reputation certainly is preferable to a bad one in the minds of most. Moreover, in all political organisation where competition rather than custom determines who shall fill the high places, it is indispensable that those whose ambition lies in the direction of the statesman's needs should, avowedly at least, make the ends of their activity the good of the state. If they fail to do this wiser aspirants walk away with the coveted prizes. Hence, notwithstanding the inducements to and opportunities for egoism in the political creations, the counteracting restraints are also powerful.

Besides this, it must be noticed that, in the present state of civilisation, the highest success in the political career is not achieved without the possession of the genuine altruistic disposition, and that this disposition makes the chances of any success much better. Common observation about us confirms such a statement. The most successful men of the present age—men like Lincoln, Gladstone, and Grant—have been predominantly altruistic. Such characters do not always command political success, but when supported by powerful intellects they achieve a success that is not surpassed; whereas, though strong intellects, unaccompanied by the self-denying character, may come to the front transiently, their great deficiency is thereby rendered more conspicuous, and their fall is only made the greater; while, indeed, many who are able enough are so palpably governed by egoistic sentiments that people will not trust them. Even if they try to deceive they are generally soon found out. Who has not seen men gifted, possessed of good ideas on political themes, and anxious to utilise their talents, so weighted by an utterly selfish and thus worthless character that they are of no benefit to the community, and wholly unable to realise their own aspirations? Endeavouring to make the whole world revolve around them as the centre, they simply exclude themselves from the social movement, and this the quicker the more blatant they are. Other people will catch their ideas and suggestions, but want nothing further of them, because they are intrinsically unavailable. To give them power or places of trust

would be a dangerous experiment. The result is, that instead of producing anything in the political field as cultivators, they can only furnish the manure for another's crop.

The power for harm of active egoism in the political sphere is greatly heightened and enlarged by that passive egoism in the constituency which permits politics to become the trade of knaves who enter political life to make a living out of it by bargaining, bribery, and almost every form of corruption. Under an autocracy supported by bayonets, it is very difficult to find a remedy for abuses of any sort, so long as those who commit the wrong are faithful in their loyalty to the sovereign power. The evil continues until it becomes so intolerable as to occasion great upheavals. But in a country where the right of suffrage remains in the people, there exists an instrument of relief which is immediately available. If political evil prevail, it is not because there is no power to check or eradicate, but because there is neglect to use the power. It is precisely this neglect that passive egoism fosters, and in such disregard of the duties of a citizen the dangers pointed out in the last chapter are greatly enhanced.

Yet I do not share the feelings of pessimists, who behold as an omen of certain and speedy ruin to the governmental order that corruption which at some periods and in some places disgraces democratic communities. Indicative of disease such corruption undoubtedly is, and of disease which ought to be watched and cured. But the freedom of political action is so great through the universality of suffrage that it is difficult for abuses to remain long enough to become firmly fixed. Individualism, even if selfish, will act as a continual solvent of the most carefully planned combinations; and without co-operation on the part of many, no great degree of power can either be gained or maintained. Neither political parties nor political cliques for a very long period in American history have been able to preserve their sway, where their domination was at all obviously productive of evil consequences. At the very worst thieves will rise against thieves, and honest men be able to hold the balance of power.

That this last does not fulfil a very high ideal of social order may be freely admitted. And that it is possible for popular sentiment to become so debased in a community where everyone has by the constitution the protection of one vote that social chaos will come again, must also impress itself upon us. Again, no social order has yet become so good that it might not be made

better ; and tendencies toward a worse state are apt to produce a worse state. Such considerations as these ought to be heeded by those who are too indolent and too much in love with their own comfort to pay any attention to public affairs. It is important always to be on the alert lest security may be imperilled. Often this is done very insidiously, and if security be lost all is lost—to the sybarite and the ambitious alike.

The difficulties and dangers in the way of attempting to cure evils by legislation and governmental authority generally, should not allow us to weaken that authority within its legitimate bounds. Nor should we forget that circumstances and conditions are all the while changing ; so that an exercise of governmental restraint, legislative or executive, may be required on the score of security at one time, which, tested by the same rule, may be wholly unnecessary at another. To discriminate between what is requisite for security and what is over-government, is a most delicate and perplexing matter. Some of the advocates of *laissez-faire* have carried their doctrine too far in restricting the sphere of governmental authority. The Post, for instance, can scarcely be said to be a necessity for security. It is maintained on grounds of convenience ; yet few would deem it advisable to abolish this department of governmental machinery. There can be no inflexible rule as to what government shall and shall not do. That extremes of theory should always be avoided is a truism. But though the doctrine of *laissez-faire* cannot in its strictness be adopted, yet the principle upon which it is founded, namely that the office of government is essentially negative, is the true one. I should qualify this by excepting education ; though in reality this constitutes no exception, for education is the most efficient means of promoting security. Other positive functions demanded by public expediency must undoubtedly be conceded from time to time as circumstances vary, but in these days of socialistic agitation we shall do well to watch with some jealousy the conferring of powers and duties upon the government which go beyond the limits marked out by the demands of security. We may, indeed, examine with far-reaching care into what security requires, but those requirements should generally be the final test.

The most important economical question to be considered under existing conditions seems to me to be unquestionably that presented by the prevalence of poverty, and the contests between capital and labour. Appertaining to this, arises the problem how far legisla-



tion should go to change existing rules as to the holding of property. Though we may repudiate with impatience the notion that the holding of property is robbery of someone else, it may still appear to us upon reflection that undue accumulation may become not only robbery as to the property itself, but may take away from others liberty and even life. The objections naturally suggesting themselves to the abolition of private ownership of land, for instance, are by no means conclusive, and may not even be pertinent to a limitation and restriction by legislative authority of the amount of anyone's holding. As Mr. Rae puts it, the aim ought to be, not to abolish private ownership, but to facilitate private acquisition, and, I may add, to multiply the number of owners, till a more equal distribution is effected. Men must have the produce of land in order to live. When, therefore, one individual holds more land than he can cultivate and improve he is certainly depriving others of the means of subsistence which they might utilise. If he produces nothing, but his holding results in keeping others from producing, then injustice is palpable. This reasoning is not extended to movables by the majority of those who urge it. They say that a man is fairly entitled to all the personal property he can acquire; so long as he does not monopolise land no restrictions should be placed upon his accumulation. But, I apprehend, we shall find it necessary to consider very seriously the expediency of restricting also, by legislative authority, the amount of personal property which one individual may hold. Certainly this is a legitimate question of politics, since it affects very vitally the social security, for the reasons given in former chapters. And much the same reasons subsist against monopoly when vast amounts of capital are locked up and not utilised as when land is withheld from those who desire to produce. For the substantial vice of great accumulation, whether it be of land or of movable capital, lies, when we get at the root of the matter, in the power it gives one man over his fellows. Growth and development are prevented, liberty is abridged, the sources of life are drained, either by the exercise of this power for ill, or, negatively, by the refraining from exercising it for good. I may not use what I have, or be able to use it; but by my great possessions I may hold sway over the actions and destinies of my neighbours, as absolute as that of a military chief. Thus the tyranny of wealth may be as bad as that of arms. Political despotism has been curtailed so far as it is upheld by the sword; so far as it is supported by the monopoly of wealth it is everywhere

rampant. Now, as shown in the last chapter, where industrial despotisms prevail there is a great danger of a return of military autocracy. We cannot for ever grind the face of the poor. For these reasons, in the words of another, a prophet of our own : 'The poverty of the people, not only in the acute but in the chronic form also of the disease, is an evil in such sense that it ought to be made a prominent and emphatic part of policy, both social and individual, fully to avail of the legitimate, practical, and efficient means tending to its cure or progressive diminution.'<sup>1</sup>

Whatever is susceptible of accomplishment by the political method, both negatively and positively, it must never be forgotten that the political machinery will either run wrong or break down completely without the proper disposition on the part of the individuals composing it. In order to clean hands there must be clean hearts. This brings us again, and finally, to the paramount, the transcendent, the supreme value of the educational method of fighting evil. Against all that individual egoism in private business dealings which we found to be so prevalent and so merciless, we are relegated almost wholly to this latter. Legislation here is peculiarly hazardous. We are never sure that we are not heightening rather than lowering the evil, or that we are not suppressing one vice only to give the opportunity of breaking forth to half a dozen others. Experience has shown that legislative attempts to regulate the natural movements of trade conditional upon the laws of supply and demand is inefficacious. Distress from high prices of corn and wheat has never been prevented by the government fixing a maximum rate per bushel ; nor will speculation be stopped by Act of Parliament forbidding it. Gambling laws may do something, but not much. The law against fraud, theoretically perfect, is comparatively impotent to prevent fraud where the disposition exists to accomplish it. The efficacious remedy is to take away such a disposition. The moral character of individuals must be elevated by careful education from the beginning of life onward.

The first thing is to cause the evil of egoism to be seen clearly. In general terms, that selfishness causes moral evil is admitted. But the extent of damage is not appreciated, nor the importance of each one bringing the matter home and regarding and regulating his own conduct. This is the trouble the preachers always meet with. Yet everyone can see that it would be better if there were no fraud, no rapacity, no cruelty, no overreaching of one by his

<sup>1</sup> Charles Frederick Adams, *National Quarterly Review* (U.S.A.), Oct. 1880.

neighbour; and the ill-conditions we endeavoured to sketch in the last two preceding chapters are obvious to the most superficial view. A continuance of such conditions must work increasing harm; and no one can be sure that his turn to be injuriously affected may not come soon. Is it not common prudence, then, to give some attention to the matter of arresting these dangerous tendencies? The process of thought described in Chapter VII., as the one by which the moral law became evolved, is the very one which ought to operate reflectively upon the disposition of the egoist. It is undeniably of advantage to the individual that everybody else be animated by an altruistic spirit, for it will entail less trouble upon him of guarding his own interests, make his possessions more secure, and increase the facility of his acquisitions. If he is so disposed, it may improve his chances of cheating or domineering over others. He cannot then afford to allow the laws to be relaxed, or their execution to be interfered with or nullified. No more can he safely favour a common sentiment that everyone is at liberty to take advantage of the necessities of other people to the fullest extent; for, however much he may pride himself upon his abilities, he is not Argus-eyed nor Briarean-handed. The altruistic rule that a man is his brother's keeper, and that all mankind are brothers, if adopted by everybody else, is surely far the best rule for him. It makes allies everywhere instead of enemies. Hence it behoves even the most selfish individual to visit with his approval all actions on the part of people generally which indicate a disposition to act altruistically, and to favour the formation of such dispositions; while he ought for his own most selfish interests to discourage and disapprove of all exhibitions of reckless or malevolent selfishness in the lives of others.

In civilised communities most men are intelligent enough to see this; they are willing that general laws be passed in aid of security and justice; they are willing that children, their own included, shall be taught to obey the laws and to repress self in the ordinary intercourse of life; they are also willing that the preacher and the schoolmaster teach altruism to other people. Out of this very fact, indeed, altruism has grown to be itself a power; and without this it would scarcely have been able to make any progress whatever.

But when the egoist has gone thus far, what is his position? Remaining egoistic, self-regarding alone, possessed by the egoistic ideal, and governed wholly by the egoistic disposition, how is his

own conduct to be affected? If he expects to have any influence in improving the *morale* of the community, or if he merely intends not to be an obstacle in the way of such improvement, he must himself either be altruistic or seem to be so. Otherwise, not only is his call to others to be self-denying the howl of the tiger to his prey to come and throw themselves into his jaws, but his own example necessarily creates resistant, and thus counter-egoistic, volitions, actions, and dispositions. If, therefore, the social spirit makes any impression upon him, he must at least conceal or counteract in some way his own egoism.

This is what is attempted by the majority in the more enlightened communities of our day and generation. Sometimes it is concealment with deceit and hypocrisy, sometimes it is atonement by munificence, or generosity in some particular instances, that the egoist relies upon to frustrate the ill effects upon him of his own selfishness. While sincerely desiring that other people may be altruistic, and recognising that his own undisguised egoism is an obstacle in the way of this, he seeks to preserve his own selfish ideals, and pursue his own selfish ends without seeming to do so.

It appears to me that if the pulpit and other moral teachers who are endeavouring to effect the amelioration of character would direct their attention more particularly to the task of showing the fruitlessness of this scheme of the egoist, they would accomplish more than they do by descanting at large upon the advantages of altruism. That it is better for mankind that each one love his neighbour is admitted; but it is not allowed by each one that it is at all important that he himself love his neighbour. He thinks he can escape this in ways such as I have indicated, while at the same time he reaps for himself the advantage of the altruism of other people. This is a great reason why it is so hard to work moral improvement in communities where no one denies but all approve the Golden Rule.

That the device of concealment is a very shallow one seems quite evident. I may wish to get an unfair advantage of my neighbour in a trade, and to that end may, by professing a zeal for his interest, and lying about the real facts of the case, beguile him into the transaction upon my own terms. But sooner or later he will find out that he has been cheated; and my reputation for altruism is gone with that man for ever. It will not take long to create for me a reputation which will estimate me at what I really am, not at what I simulate myself to be. With each person who tries really

to be egoistic while pretending to be altruistic, a crisis must necessarily come when he must either abandon his egoism or acquire a reputation for that and hypocrisy superadded. People are strangely credulous in supposing that they can deceive in this way. But professions, explanations, and sophistries are of not the slightest avail. They are found out, and the result is even more calamitous than such people suppose. They both acquire a bad reputation, and deceive themselves in regard to its existence.

Counteracting the bad favour of evil deeds by good ones is a much safer method for the egoist. It gives the appearance of repentance, and seems to evince a disposition not wholly selfish. Besides, if one robs Peter to pay Paul, the latter and his friends are in some sort propitiated. Acting under this system of procedure, the egoist may be open and shameless even in malevolence, relying upon his ability to nullify the ill-repute of this by large benefactions. He can afford to browbeat, oppress, steal, and rob—to snatch the bread from the mouths of widows and the fatherless, till he has acquired wealth; and then, in the latter portion of his life, may turn saint and shine as a model of holy charity. Success in this way, it is quite true, may be achieved. Most people have within their own experience witnessed instances. It is with very similar views that the general sentiment, before criticised, arises that all is fair in business. It is thought legitimate to get what one can, by means fair or foul, in the counting-house, if only a part of the wages of sin is placed in the contribution-box or subscribed for the orphan asylum.

But however much the reputation of the egoist may be saved by this method, it does not contribute very much to improve the social condition, upon which, after all, every man is so largely dependent. Force everywhere elicits resistance, and the state of war continues and increases, producing only destruction, and generating destructive influences. Besides, the egoistic habit is apt to grow stronger with indulgence; so that it will often turn out that the egoist will wholly forget to become a saint. His benefactions he will put off to a more convenient season, which will never arrive. Meantime he goes on smiting, gouging, biting, and scratching everyone whom he deals with. Not much can be done with him by society unless he grows bold enough to overstep the limits of freedom allowed him by the law. If we are theologically inclined, we may derive some comfort from the thought that hell is yawning to receive him. But the practical consideration of means by which

such creatures may be eliminated from the social organism must force itself upon the minds even of men just like them. And, after viewing the problem in all its aspects, there is only one conclusion to be arrived at, namely that the reform must begin at home. If we expect society to be more altruistic : if we believe it is better that other people be self-denying, and hope that they will become so : we must ourselves be in reality, and not in the seeming, contributors in personal character and example to such a result.

This has been said before. It has been said many times indeed in this work, and by very many people everywhere. Jesus of Nazareth said it a long while ago, and it was said centuries before his time. Preachers and teachers are all the time saying it. That others will continue the iteration is greatly to be desired. When critics remark that such sentiment is antiquated and trite, they also will do a service by calling attention to the truth again ; provided their remarks are pungent enough to detain anybody's attention—for there is a vapidty and inanity of criticism which is often much more intolerable than the literature criticised. No critic will dare to assert that it is obsolete doctrine. All moral progress involves and requires iteration ; and being sure that we have the correct principle and the efficacious practical precept, our only course is to enforce it by continued and repeated application. Since people have got tired of pulpit reiteration, perhaps, too, there will be an advantage in having the truth reached and presented from another and quite opposite point of view.

We may derive much comfort and become inspired with strong hope from the reflection that altruism is a natural force working in and through individuals, and thus throughout the social organism. As society grows more complex its power is necessarily increasing ; in all stages of progress it is present in some degree. The most cruel and bloodthirsty wretch that ever existed had at least brief intervals of altruistic feeling toward wife, mistress, or child, if no other. Normally, indeed, the most porcine of mortals has his porcine affection for his family. This sentiment is capable of development to all the degrees of altruism, and ever widened with the advance of civilisation. There is hence a potent natural influence at work which can confidently be reckoned upon in aid of the elimination of evil in the social sphere.

There is great need at present of directing the attention of the truth-loving, and the lovers of their kind, who are unfettered by the bonds of authority, toward a more thorough examination of

the nature and value of religion in the newer lights of the existing age. In our consideration of the Doctrine of Sin (Chapter XIV.), it appeared that what is called 'spirituality,' or 'the spiritual life,' is a development of natural susceptibilities into altruistic sentiment and character. Is this development fostered by a connection of the spirit of self-abnegation with an assumed or believed divine presence? And is there warrant, and if so what warrant, for this belief? These are the questions both for scientists and for the supporters of religion to answer. They cannot be answered upon any declaration of authority. 'Christ and Him crucified' cannot longer be preached to the intelligent world on the basis of feudal relationship. Such preaching has little effect now, and soon it will become ridiculous. Jesus may be held up as an exemplar, but not as a sovereign. Yet it still may be that there is a divine force, or a higher natural force, which comes only 'by fasting and prayer.' In view of what christianity has accomplished in the world, we have no right to despise its assertion that there is such a power for 'curing the soul.' But christian teachers make a mistake in their vehement assertions that the existence of such a gift from God has been demonstrated; and the methods they take to convince and persuade are absolutely fatal to their attempts to establish any truth which can stand for ever because it is truth. If there be such 'divine grace,' it must be made to appear and be tested by the methods of observation and experiment in precisely the same way as the existence and effects of any physical, moral, and social force are indicated and verified by science. Let me suggest, then, to the teachers of religion, who are full of alarm, because their temples are everywhere falling about their heads, that it is quite possible they may meet and defeat scientific criticism; but it is only by use of the scientific method that they can hope to do so. They must themselves become scientists. When they do this, their work will be welcomed by scientists, and will be much more appreciated withal by their own constituencies.

Meantime, it is a matter for congratulation that the scientific and the religious ends of human effort are becoming so fully coincident. I suppose Paul was right, from the point of view both of religious and scientific morality, when he enjoined the Romans, 'Owe no man anything but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.' Thus, if the results of our criticism in this book are just, and show forth a true doctrine, we find a common practical problem to be worked out by religion and science

together, irrespective of differences both of final ends and of the premises out of which this practical problem comes to present itself. Science and religion—to use for the moment the ordinary antithesis, misleading though it be—have before them alike to investigate and follow in the sense explained: THE BEST METHODS OF CURING THE SOUL.

In recognising the necessity of this, we have, I think, got upon our raft—‘the best and most irrefragable of human notions.’<sup>1</sup> There remains further the theoretical question, which indeed may have important practical bearings, but primarily at least exhibits a theoretical aspect, Is there in addition some word of God? The teachers of religion with emphasis, and often intolerance of dispute, declare that there is. But attribute it to what they may, they have not made out their case to the satisfaction of a very large and increasing body of the most intelligent of their contemporaries. If only unity upon the practical problem can be preserved, perhaps after a while, from one side or the other, some Moses will arise who from a Pisgah height ‘of exalted wit’ will behold and declare unto us a land fairer than any in which we have dwelt, into which we may enter as into an earthly paradise, and whose atmosphere mayhap will fill us with the breath of eternal life.

Our concluding word is, that in all the relations of life, business as well as social, men must be taught, and must learn, to regard their fellows, not as inorganic nature to be used, but as independent personalities, with aims and ends like their own, whose development and realisation is a thing which it is the duty and the pleasure of every other to favour and assist rather than neglect, blight, and defeat. The true and only self-satisfying ideal of activity is that which contemplates human beings as acting upon each other, not as the forces of inorganic nature work—in blind impact and resistance—but rather as the forces of organic life, assimilatively, each finding his ends in the ends of the others, and all working in and through the others for the development of one organic social whole, in which each individual is at once the means and the end of all the rest. As Emerson said, ‘Every man takes care that his neighbour shall not cheat him. But a day comes when he begins to care that he do not cheat his neighbour. Then all goes well. He has changed his market-cart into a chariot of the Sun.’<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Phædo*.

<sup>2</sup> *On Worship*.



It is not past hope that these things may actually become nearly, perhaps quite, universal characteristics of human social life. Indeed, the indications are rather that they must, spite of all hindrances and obstacles. When this perfect ideal of the organic unity of mankind is realised, then we shall have the minimum of evil. This ideal is no other than the altruistic; and its following makes for the elimination of evil, and secures so far as is possible the greatest happiness of the greatest number.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I am under special obligations to Mr. O. E. Straus, of New York, for reading the MSS. of this work, and for many valuable suggestions.



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